Week ending April 10 1954
Every Wednesday Fourpence

JOHN BULL

BEGINNING INSIDE: A SUPERB NOVEL BY JOHN MASTERS

BHOWANI JUNCTION

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Paul Brickhill's greatest success —the triumphant story of

DOUGLAS BADER

Y'S MEN WEAR Y-FRONT!

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be twice the man in

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the first and finest men's support underwear

The modern conception of underwear comfort . . . trim, snug, absorbent, hygienic . . . sized to fit YOU. No buttons, no tapes, easy to launder, and with the unique Y-Front support construction. Shorts and Singlets (as shown). Midways (short legs) and short sleeved Vests.

ALL SIZES · ALL STYLES
6/6
PER GARMENT

To put you wise . . . Y-Front underwear was first evolved in America in the 1930's, and, with new standards of hygiene and comfort, plus a unique principle of support construction, rapidly achieved widespread acclaim. To-day, the fine old firm of Lyle and Scott of Hawick, Scotland is one of no less than thirteen manufacturers of Y-Front underwear around the globe.
Since its introduction by Lyle and Scott to Great Britain in 1938 demand has constantly outstripped supply, but new production facilities now make it possible for more and more men to join the hundreds of thousands of Y-Front wearers in this country. When you go to your Man's Shop, insist on the exclusive hip-tape fitting which guarantees the right size. But remember, as with any successful innovation, there are many imitations. Make sure you get the one and only Y-Front by Lyle and Scott—the first and the best.

Y-FRONT IS MADE ONLY BY Lyle and Scott OF SCOTTISH KNITWEAR FAME

EDITORIAL

Holiday lunacy

ONE busy Saturday in August, Mr. Charles Price watched the holiday traffic at Birmingham's two main-line stations. What he saw made him return to his job at the British Travel and Holidays Association with a renewed sense of purpose.

"All the trains to the sea were packed to the limit—and a bit more," he recalls. "Standing at the windows of one, ready for an eight-hour journey to Penzance, were at least a dozen mothers holding babies."

AS the association's holiday development officer, he hopes to persuade people to spread their holidays over the whole summer instead of "the lunatic peak fortnight"—the last week in July and the first in August.

MR. CHARLES PRICE
"We must break holiday habits"

Out of 496 towns which have announced official holidays, 219 have chosen one or both of these two weeks. And about sixty-five per cent of holidaymakers will go in July or August.

Yet out of the four holiday months the middle two have the most rainfall—an average 3.1 inches against June's 2.3 inches. They have only five and a half sun hours; June has an hour longer.

Costs are much higher. The average is eighteen per cent more than in June and September. Seaside cottages often cost double. Travel is tougher. More than 14,000,000 tickets are usually issued in July and August. Three million fewer people go in June and September. And it is much more comfortable out of the crowded, beds-in-the-bathroom months.

WHEN holidaymakers at twelve leading resorts were questioned during the peak fortnight, forty per cent admitted they could have chosen another time. Yet even the stay-at-homes try to have Bank Holiday included in their holiday period.

One common reason for the concentrated rush is school holidays. They always fall in the most crowded time. So parents are forced to go then unless they want to deprive their children of a fortnight's schooling—which, by law, they can. But Mr. Price believes that if industry chose more sensible times, the schools would follow.

HE wants to get Bank Holiday moved to the *last* Monday in August. "If we could break the holiday habits, a general spread-over would follow." But the government has said it will wait for a public demand.

This is a case where the government should lead, not follow. Next year, Bank Holiday should be moved. And, this year, people who can choose their holiday time should leave August alone—and have a better holiday.

THIS WEEK'S COVER

DULL grown-ups believe that stilts men put their trousers on first and then let them drop over the stilts. Children know better; and Henry Neave's cover proves that they draw them on, just like other self-respecting males. Neave should know. One summer he joined a circus. "A wonderful experience of good comradeship amid many difficulties," he says. "When the shows go on the road each April I often feel like rejoining them."

Savile Row
new styles for spring and summer

No. 198 Burgundy embossed sports shoe with roll edge crepe sole 59'9
Nos. 202/3 Black or brown Step-in with twin elastic gussets, leather sole 59'9
Nos. 207/8 Black or brown Genuine Calf Mudguard shoe, leather sole 69'9

MANY OTHER STYLES FOR MEN from 49'9 to 79'9

Send P.C. for brochure and retailer's address to Savile Row Shoemakers, Dept. J.B.I, Northampton.

Pay 1,000 gns. for a pedigree Bull —and let it go hungry?

Unthinkable! The proud owner knows that prize-ring condition and that rich glossy coat can only result from a carefully balanced diet and daily grooming. Equally, thoroughbred shoes need daily nourishment and care to keep them smart and comfortable—a daily dressing with Cherry Blossom, the food for shoe leather.

Superfine oils, waxes and dyes in Cherry Blossom keep shoes supple and lengthen their life. And Cherry Blossom is economical both in price and in use.

4½d. and 6½d.

Tonette, Light Brown, Ox-blood, White, Black. Also Dark Tan (6½d. size only)

Keep your shoes in tip-top condition with

CHERRY BLOSSOM SHOE POLISH

THE PEDIGREE POLISH

More people drink

WATNEY'S

than any other

BROWN ALE

HAVE YOU TRIED IT?

JOHN BULL 189 HIGH HOLBORN LONDON W.C.1
APRIL 10, 1954 VOL. 95 NO. 2493 PHONE: TEMPLE BAR 2468 GRAMS: HEROICALLY, WESTCENT, LONDON

FREE SPEECH

Knows Latin, but she can't cook

WHEN my wife was ill, my daughter, who was then seventeen, took over the running of the home for a week, and a fine mess she made of it.

There was a parents' meeting at her school soon afterwards, and I had a word with the headmistress. "It's a pity my girl hasn't learned some domestic science," I said. The head explained that some girls did take the subject, but those doing the advanced arts course had not the time for it. Early last month my daughter was married to a young schoolmaster.

"You've made a big mistake," I joked to my new son-in-law. "Latin won't cook your meals." He took the point up seriously. "She'll find time to learn cooking," he said. "But she'd never have found the time and energy to learn Latin, or medieval history, or to appreciate poetry. I'd rather have a few flat cakes at first than fifty years with no conversation."—JOHN KING, Surrey.

Visitants

ONE evening, I was standing in the churchyard waiting for my fellow-bellringers. The belfry door was shaded from the moon by a giant yew. I heard the whistle of a passing railway train, and then the silence was shattered by a terrible noise. It seemed to come from just above my

head, and in a moment I was making good time for the gate. When common sense asserted itself, I walked back to the belfry door, torch at the ready. A rustle over my head brought the torch up, and in the beam there appeared a long tail. Then I saw blue feathers. Blinking on a high branch sat a peacock and two hens. They had flown from the nearby manor to roost in the tree, and had been provoked to reply to the whistle from the engine.—B. J. CHAPPLE, Martin's Road, Brockenhurst, Hampshire.

The peacock sometimes makes a loud squealing cry, says the London Zoo.

Way Out West

I WAS in Western Australia when Paddy Hannan discovered gold at Kalgoorlie in 1893 (JOHN BULL, March 20). My first visit to the town was in 1894, when the editor of the *Coolgardie Miner* sent me to report its first race meeting. I spent the night there, and a hectic night it was. Ginger Sly, the chief bully in the place, was shot, and it was a sign of the times that the police took no action against the man who shot him, although his identity was no secret to most of the townsfolk.

The shooting took place outside Mrs. Nugent's hostelry, where Fred Lindrum, then Australia's billiards champion, was in charge of the billiards room. His grandson is the famous snooker player Horace Lindrum. To guard against the stealing of gold ore, miners in those days had to take off their working clothes in one room after the shift, and then walk stark naked into another room where they dressed.—CHARLIE ROSE, Thirlmere Road, Muswell Hill, London, N.10.

Into The World

IN Northumberland, it was once the custom that neither a mother nor her baby could visit a neighbour's house until the child had been christened ("Free Speech," March 20) and the mother churched. The christening usually took place when the baby was a month old. Then, at the first three houses to which the baby was taken, it had to receive a bag containing a cheese sandwich (the food of life), a pinch of salt (the staff of life), a box of matches (to light it through life) and a silver piece (for wealth). — ETHEL TAYLOR, Hogarth Walk, Lockleaze, Bristol, 7.

Churching is the bringing of a woman to church to have thanks offered for the delivery of her child.

WATCH OUT FOR . . .

RAFFLES

The original gentleman crook is coming soon to John Bull

Further details next week

No Secret

MY forenames date me, not roughly ("Free Speech," March 20) but to the year, and even to the month. I think they have a certain charm.—VIMY RIDGE ISAAC, Glamorganshire.

Vimy Ridge, near Arras, France, was stormed by Canadian troops in April, 1917.

. . . The most amusing Christian names I have come across are Zeppelina and Sirena.—R. C., County Durham.

Room For Two

THE problem of putting two cars into a garage which has an entrance the width of only one car has been neatly solved in many blocks of flats on the Continent. Two wooden platforms are fitted with wheels to run on steel rails. When the first motorist comes home in the evening, he drives his car on to one of the movable platforms so that, as my photograph shows, it can be pushed to one side of the garage. The other platform is

then placed in the centre of the garage, opposite the entrance, so that the second motorist can drive on to it. Obviously, either car can leave first in the morning.—L. A. TEMPLE, B.A.O.R. 23, Germany.

Yesterdays

AFTER being away for forty-two years, I went back to my home-town to live. One day, I was walking along one of the new roads when I noticed a former teacher of mine pottering about in a front garden. I was in his class in the year 1895-96, and had

Continued on page 6

NOW! Great new South African Grape Competition

£3,500 CASH MUST BE WON!

FIRST PRIZE £1,000

10 Second Prizes of £100

1,500 Consolation Awards of £1 each

Everyone who buys a bunch of delicious South African Grapes can enter this intriguing competition — FREE! And you can enter as often as you like, provided you buy a bunch for each entry and provided you submit all entries after the first on the official entry form you get from your greengrocer.

Delicious South African Grapes are now in the shops — and at very reasonable prices! Buy some right away and qualify for this bright, big-money competition.

IT'S FREE AND EASY! All you have to do is think of an apt and original name for the happy South African Grape Baby (illustrated here). It's the spirit of glorious South African Grapes—of radiant sunshine, sweetness and enjoyment—and the name should suggest these qualities. It might for instance be something like "Sweet Susie Sugarbush" or "Little Tommy Tuck-in" or "Sonny Sweetheart". It can be a boy's name or a girl's name, but it must not be more than three words long.

OVER TO YOU Get some South African Grapes today and, while you and your family are enjoying them, imagine that the Grape Baby is a new arrival in *your* family. Decide between you what *you* think it should be called. Then, with pen or ballpoint, fill in the coupon below, not forgetting the name of the retailer who sold you your grapes, and send it in straight away.

BUT DON'T STOP THERE! Remember! Every bunch of South African Grapes you buy throughout the season entitles you to another entry — as well as being a welcome, inexpensive treat for the whole family.

"Give me a name!"
READ THIS FIRST
—it will help you win
As you can see, I'm plump and sweet,
Just like the grapes I love to eat,
Like them, I thrive in summer light.
Like theirs my skin is clear and bright.
They give me joy and energy,
Good health and strong vitality.
You'll love them too and, who can tell,
Perhaps win pounds and pounds as well.
So buy Cape Grapes and join the game!
Brush up your wits! Give me a name!

BUY SOUTH AFRICAN GRAPES TODAY —and enjoy your chance to win!

To SOUTH AFRICAN GRAPE COMPETITION
Box No. 219, 1 Dover Street, London, W.1

I think the Grape Baby should be called

_____

I agree to abide by the rules of this competition

*Name*_____
(BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE)

*Address*_____

I certify I bought my grapes from

*Name*_____

*Address*_____
(name and address of retailer or retailer's stamp),

*Usual signature of competitor*_____ JB1

RULES

1 Write your entry in the space provided. This should consist of one name only and the name should not be of more than three words (see examples above).

2 All entries will be carefully considered and a panel of judges, including Sir Compton Mackenzie, The Senior South African Trade Commissioner, Miss Enid Blyton, Miss Kay Hammond and Mr. John Clements, will award prizes for the entries which in their opinion are the most apt, witty and original.

3 Any residents of Great Britain and Northern Ireland may enter this competition, except members of the South African Deciduous Fruit Board, their advertising agents or any others concerned with handling the competition, or their families.

4 No responsibility will be accepted by the organisers for any entries lost, mislaid or damaged. No correspondence regarding this competition will be entered into.

5 All prizewinners will be notified. Major prizewinners will be announced in the press.

6 You may enter as often as you wish provided (A) That a bunch of grapes is bought for each entry submitted, and the retailer's name, with your signature and address (in BLOCK CAPITALS) appear on each entry. (B) That all entries after the first are on the official entry forms obtainable from the retailer.

7 The judges' decision must be accepted as final and legally binding.

8 The copyright of all names submitted becomes the property of the South African Deciduous Fruit Board.

9 All entries should be sent to the address given at the head of the entry coupon.

10 Closing date will be May 5th. All entries received after May 5th will be disqualified.

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★ SUITABLE FOR ALL SURFACES—EVEN TILES
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★ STEAM, HEAT, OIL AND PETROL PROOF
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For a satin finish on Walls & Ceilings use
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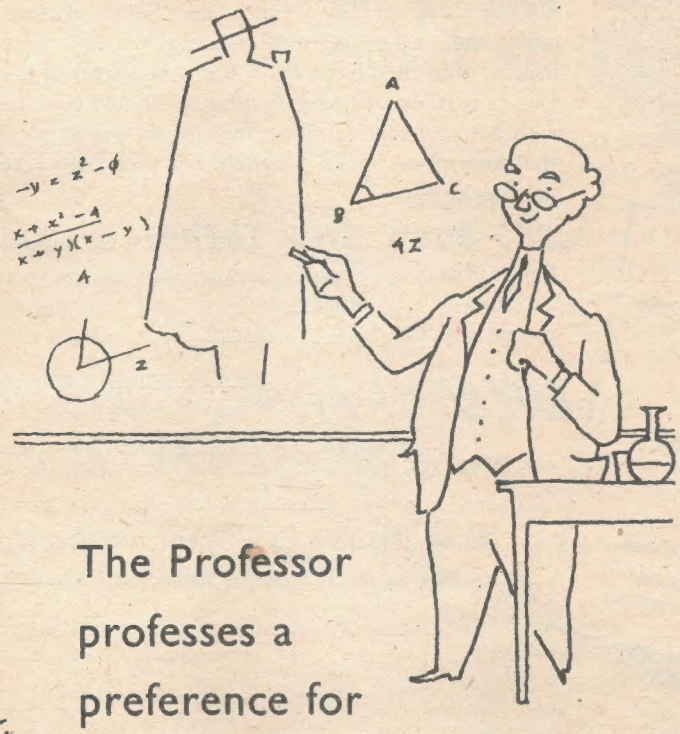
2-3 Hour EMULSION FLAT

Write for booklet and name of stockist to the Sole Manufacturers U.K.
GOODLASS, WALL & CO., LTD.
179/185, (D.4) Gt. Portland St. W.1. Est. 1840



The Professor professes a preference for

SANDEMAN
PORT or SHERRY

"You'll like it"

FREE SPEECH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

not spoken to him since I left school. Out of curiosity, I halted at his gate. He looked up. I was just about to mention my name, but he stopped me and, after some hesitation, gave first my surname, and then both Christian name and surname. In the course of our conversation, he mentioned several other boys who were in my class, listed six who were promoted after an examination, and gave a short history of many who were still in the town.—C. A. O., South Shields, County Durham.

Round-up

DURING carnival week in Malta, when the children dress up, I went to a Valletta cinema to see the Red Indian 3-D film *Fort Ti*. A woman came in with her small son decked out in the best Texas style—six-guns in holsters and cowboy boots with spurs. The film soon had the mother so busy ducking knives, burning torches and showers of arrows that she did not notice her son slip out of his seat and disappear.

After the picture there was a frantic search for the lost boy. He was found crawling up an aisle peering carefully under each seat. "What in the world are you looking for?" his mother asked him. "Go away and leave me alone," he replied. "I want to find some of those arrows."—MICHAEL AZZOPARDI, Oratory Street, Gzira, Malta, G.C.

The week before Ash Wednesday (the first day of Lent) is a time of festivity in Malta, as in many Latin countries.

Accent Bar

MY uncle, a clergyman, once applied for a country church in Wales. It was a private living, and he was interviewed by the patron, who was the local lord of the manor, and his wife, an Englishwoman. It was a short interview. Husband and wife exchanged glances as soon as my uncle spoke. He was not appointed. Later, when he met the Cambridge M.A., who had been given the living, he realized why he had been unsuccessful. It was the accent handicap, referred to recently in "Free Speech." "They did not want a man with a Welsh accent, however brilliant a scholar he was," my uncle was told. —MRS. J., Llangollen, Denbighshire.

The interview must have taken place before 1920, the year in which the disestablishment and disendowment of the Welsh Church took effect. Since then there has been no private patronage in Wales. Most of the clergy now working in the Church In Wales speak Welsh.

Earned Income

I GAVE myself a bonus in March last year. My last salary cheque for the income tax year was due. I checked my P.A.Y.E. code number and allowances, and then asked the pay clerk to reduce my salary by one penny. Somewhat reluctantly he did so, and then found that the tax deduction he had to make was three shillings less than it would have been before the cut. So my cheque was for just two and elevenpence more than that of a colleague with the same pay and the same code number. But on the way home I stopped to drink the Chancellor's health, so perhaps the Exchequer was no worse off after all.—U., Worcestershire.

This trick might work. For example: a man who, after deduction of allowances from his gross income, had a taxable income in 1953-54 of £726 10s. would pay £176 15s. tax. If he earned a penny less, he would pay three shillings less tax. But he might lose his extra shillings if a more exact assessment had to be made later.

Local Colour

IN the mining districts of the Northern Territory of Australia, we have nicknames as colourful as those from Wales and Cornwall which have been given in "Free Speech." I remember men called The Bandyscooter (from his walk), The Little Hairy Maggot, What-what, and Beer-mit-a-dash. The Cow and Calf were inseparables; the Cow was only half the size of his friend the Calf. Terrible Billy was the mildest man I ever met; folk said he stood four foot eight in his boots and always apologized to his shadow if he trod on it. The Emu took fifteens in boots, and had a waist measurement of about nineteen inches. Gentle Annie was a prize-fighter with a soft whispering voice. —J. S. LITCHFIELD, Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia.

My Pupils Would All Fail

I HEARTILY agree that the "Eleven-Plus" examination (JOHN BULL Editorial, March 20) does not do the job it is supposed to do in picking the best candidates for grammar schools. But I grant that I may be prejudiced: I was such a dunce at the age of eleven that my parents did not send me to a secondary school.

The eleven-plus test is just nonsensical. The intelligence test does not touch creation, originality or the emotions—just as school subject learning does not touch them. In my own private school—where no child is compelled to attend any lesson—an exam at eleven would fail the lot, but I have had many pupils who became bright mathematicians, engineers, historians, actors and actresses later on.

I am inclined to think that the child who develops late is the better horse. I have often seen young children who could read at three become rather dull students. Not always, of course. But who is wise enough to legislate about the rate of a child's development?

I have a fancy that a man can't work well until he is forty. I don't say that that is natural, but, since childhood is playhood and every child is deprived of natural play by insane timetables for maths and grammar and other deadly subjects, our children leave school with their play instinct suppressed and they are inclined to live out that instinct at an age when a properly educated adult would want to work.

A. S. Neill

Maybe that accounts for the millions who *watch* football; they play by proxy, just as they live by proxy in cheap cinema dramas.—A. S. NEILL, Summerhill School, Leiston, Suffolk.

At Summerhill, Alexander Sutherland Neill's well-known "free behaviour" school, the children govern themselves, and there are no punishments except the fines they fix. Neill, now seventy, started work at fourteen checking gas meters and saved enough to go to Edinburgh University. He believes that repression means misery, and is bringing up his daughter, Zoe, aged seven, on the principle of "self-regulation."

Letters intended for publication should be as brief as possible and include the sender's full name and address. John Bull pays a guinea for every letter printed, and at usual rates for readers' photographs. Readers with personal problems should send inquiries (other than medical) to John Bull Free Advice Service with a stamped addressed envelope for reply.

Meat's the need of dogs like yours!

Meat is a dog's *natural* diet—and WOOF contains only pure, wholesome, nourishing meat. For bounding health and energy, feed your dog WOOF. He'll love it and thrive on it. ½lb. tin now costs only **10d.**

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4C/12

—but what's happened to your COLD?

IT'S GONE!—*I've been taking* **BEECHAM'S POWDERS**

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2 Powders for 5½d. Cartons of 8 Powders 1/7

For COLDS & CHILLS FEVERISHNESS RHEUMATIC PAINS HEADACHES & NEURALGIA

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ALSO AVAILABLE IN TABLET FORM 1/7 PER BOTTLE

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I'd never be without Sellotape. It's the modern way of mending, binding and sealing. It's neat, quick and effortless to use. Ask for Sellotape by name and make sure you get it!"

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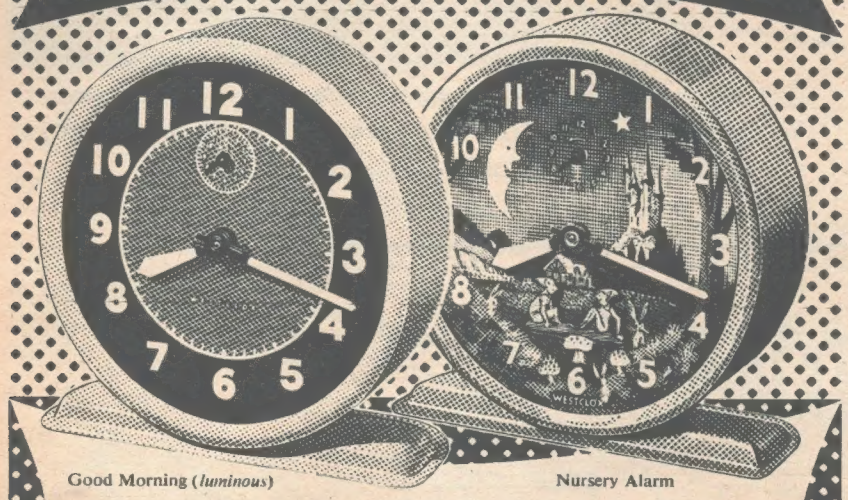
REGENCY DRY, REGENCY BROWN, REGENCY CREAM, AMONTILLADO, HUNTING, CAPE DRY, CAPE BROWN, and CAPE CREAM.

Order your Sampler enclosing 20/- from Dept. (J.B.I.) Grant & Co. Ltd. 21 Bury Street, St. James's London S.W.1

P4

WAKE WITH

WESTCLOX



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Beginning a great novel—the Book Society Choice for May

BHOWANI JUNCTION

by JOHN MASTERS

I HAD A FINE new motor-bike that year, in Bhowani. It has got smashed up since, but it was looking good the day I went down to see Victoria after she came back from the army. I got to the house, cut off the engine, and sat there in the saddle while it coughed, hiccupped once or twice, and died. The truth is, I was afraid to go in. She'd been away a long time. She was an officer. She'd have changed.

I left the bike on its stand and walked round towards the side of the house. It was a semi-detached bungalow, Number 4 Collett Road, in the Railway Lines, where we railway people live.

There are really three separate Bhowanis—the Railway Lines, the cantonments, where the English lived, and the city, where God knows how many thousand Indians are packed in like sardines.

The main railway line runs past the back of the bungalows and I could see an engine on the line; it stood hissing softly. The crew were all wogs. They like to be called Indians, especially nowadays, but I always call them wogs in my mind still. *We* used to have that run, but it was always wogs by 1946. It wasn't much of a run, a down goods train.

"Down" means the direction going away from Bombay, and "up" means going to Bombay. Every railway has its own words, but that's what we use on the Delhi Deccan. Perhaps I ought to say, too, that "wogs" is a word for Indians, and when I say "we" or "us" I mean the Anglo-Indians. Sometimes we're called domiciled Europeans. Most of us have a little Indian blood—not much, of course.

I walked to the front door and rang the bell. Rose Mary, Victoria's sister, opened it so quickly she must have been watching me. I was nervous at seeing her, because I had been going out a bit with her while Victoria was away in the army, and Rose Mary is a funny girl.

She said quickly: "Oh, hallo, Mr. Taylor, do come in. Victoria will be ready in a minute. Won't you sit in the parlour?" Then she walked away, and I went into the parlour, but I didn't sit down. Mrs. Jones was standing at the end of the passage. She didn't say

She had been crying, and I knew why. I longed to comfort her, make her understand. "I love you, Victoria," I said. "I know what you feel"

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM LITTLE

anything to me. Mrs. Jones is—well, difficult. She is very brown, and her stockings always hang in wrinkles round her legs, and she chews betel nut in secret.

Victoria came into the room, and I tell you, my heart stood still. Victoria is tall, and her eyes are brown, and she has the longest legs and thick black hair. I don't want to talk about her figure because I love her, but she has a figure like a film star's, only better.

She moved slowly into the room, leaving the door open behind her. I said: "Why—why, Vicky, you have grown!" I was nervous, and it was a foolish thing to say.

She said: "Don't call me Vicky." She never liked that, but I'd forgotten. She didn't mind me teasing her in the old days, though.

I HAD my topi in my hand, and she smiled at me and came forward. I said: "You were glaring at me just now as if I was one of your bad army girls. Should I call you 'Ma'am,' then, after all? 'Miss Subaltern Jones?'"

She laughed and said: "No, that's all over, thank heavens. Only please call me Victoria."

I took a pace towards her, and put out my hand to touch her. It was breathless in there, and my voice was hoarse. I said, "Victoria," and then I dropped my topi and took her in my arms and kissed her.

It started as a little kiss, a gentle kiss. Then I wanted to put my heart there in that kiss, because I did not dare to speak. We had not kissed for four years. I wondered whether she'd kissed any of the officers up there in Delhi. But I didn't like to think about that. It would only make me miserable to know, and yet I'd love her just the same, which would make me more miserable than ever.

She stood back from me and said: "It *is* nice to see you again, Patrick."

"That is exactly what I was going to say, Vicky—Victoria," I said, and straightened my tie. I was wearing my old school tie from St. Thomas's, Gondwara. I always liked to wear it. St. Thomas's was only for Anglo-Indians and domiciled Europeans.

I said: "You haven't seen my new motor-bike

yet, have you? Let's go for a ride." I thought we would go down to the Karode Bridge to dangle our feet in the water. We might have a swim, too.

She said: "All right. That sounds fun. I'll get my towel and bathing suit."

While she was in her room, Rose Mary came along and leaned against the passage wall near me. She was looking at me in a funny way. I am afraid she was jealous, and I was glad when Victoria came back.

We went out into the street, and I said: "Where is your topi? You will get all sunburned."

"I never wear one," she told me.

"But the sun!" I cried. "It is the hottest time of the day! You will get all brown!"

She tossed her head. The heavy dark curls of hair swung round on her shoulders. She looked at me in a funny way and said: "It isn't sunburn that makes us brown, is it?"

I was bending over the handlebars, turning the twist-grip throttle. It was not a nice thing to say, and I felt frightened that she had said it. If we didn't wear topis people would think we were wogs. Not me; I have pale blue eyes, almost green, and red hair, a sort of dull ginger —but most of us. She knew that, so there was nothing to say.

I felt her taking a good look at me. Her own skin was the same colour as mine, perhaps a little browner, less yellow. No one could mistake either of us for anything but what we were—Anglo-Indians, Eurasians, cheechees, half-castes, eight-annas, blacky-whites. I've heard all the names they call us, but I don't think about them unless I'm angry.

I kicked furiously, and the engine turned over. I twisted the throttle so that the engine made the hell of a noise, a real racketing bellow. I didn't dare speak myself, but I could make the engine say something for me.

JUST as the bike began to move, Rose Mary ran out of the house, waving her hand and shouting: "Patrick, wait, stop!" She was breathless and sort of happy, like when you're hurting someone you don't like. I had to stop. She said: "Patrick, you're wanted at the office. They've just telephoned."

I sat there with my feet spread, holding the bike upright. I don't think I've ever been so disappointed.

"It's a derailment," Rose Mary said.

Victoria said: "I'll come to the station with you. Perhaps you won't have to stay too long.

Rose Mary opened her mouth and shut it again. I think Victoria made her suggestion just to annoy Rose Mary, just to show her that I belonged to her, Victoria. I was so pleased that she had said it, and especially pleased because it was her idea, not mine.

We roared up the Pike, going past the Little Bazaar and the Silver Guru's tree. I propped the bike against the outside wall and ran behind Victoria up the steps.

THE platform was crowded with natives, as usual. Victoria followed me as I shoved through the crowd. Several wogs turned and glared at me, and one or two muttered abuse under their breath, but they didn't dare speak aloud.

One of the people I pushed out of the way was Surabhai, the local Congress boss. He always wore a collar and tie, a European coat, a white Gandhi cap, and a white dhoti. That day he was wearing green socks and violet suspenders. I heard Victoria, behind me, say, "I'm sorry."

Surabhai said: "*You* are sorry? *He* pushed me, the haughty fellow!" But he smiled at her. He had a rubbery, round face and huge eyes, rather like Eddie Cantor. She squeezed past him and came on with me.

We went up the stairs to my office—I was the district traffic superintendent—and pushed our way inside.

The coolie-messenger was squatting in the doorway, and I kicked him on to his feet as I went by. There were more people crowded inside than I could count. The door was marked clearly: NO ADMITTANCE EXCEPT ON DUTY, but that wouldn't make any difference to an Indian, not even a fellow like my new assistant, Kasel, who was supposed to be so efficient.

My God, I felt fed up. I stood inside the door and bawled: "Get out! *Hut jao,* you black so-and-so's!" Some of the people edged out, others edged in. I reached the desk and said: "My God, Kasel, what the hell is going on here?" I was ashamed of what Victoria had seen in my office.

Kasel was a slight, tall Indian with a thin face. He was about thirty years old and always wore a turban because he was a Sikh. He had a high-bridged nose and always looked so damned sad I could kick him. He got up quickly when he saw us, and bowed to Victoria. Then he sat down again, twiddling a pencil in his hands, and said: "The coal train, number two-nought-four-three, ran off the rails at Pathoda. No one was hurt. The district engineer said——"

I didn't want to know what the D.E. had done. I wanted to know what *he* had done. I asked him, and he told me, in a sad way, but methodical, and it sounded all right, so I said to him: "What the hell are these people doing in here? It is like a circus."

Surabhai, the Congress fellow who looked like Eddie Cantor, had found his way up there. He faced me and joined his palms together and said: "We are only poor natives, good sir. Forgive us for it. We have come to ask when, by your favour, we may expect to be allowed to entrain on those trains for which we have bought tickets." He was very excited. He fairly danced around, like a boxer, as he spoke.

"You'll hear in good time," I said. "Now get out of here, all of you. *Bahar jao, ek dum!*"

Surabhai danced forward again, his eyes popping at me. Then Kasel, at the desk, said: "*Please,* Mr. Surabhai," and the fellow subsided and after a few mutterings followed the others out of the room.

KASEL got out of the chair behind the desk, and I sat down. It was my chair, and I didn't like the way he had butted in with Surabhai. I told him to get a chair for Victoria—"For Miss Jones," I said. Then I told him to give me more details. I wanted to know first whether it was an accident or sabotage.

He said: "We don't know yet. The district engineer has gone up on the trolley with the district mechanical engineer and one or two others. The breakdown train's gone to Pathoda."

I stubbed out the cigarette that I'd only just lit. I was getting angrier all the time. "Well —oh, damn it," I said, "I suppose I'd better go up. I bet you it was sabotage, and I bet you the bloody Congress did it." I said that because I was sure as eggs that Kasel was secretly a Congressman.

He said—and he spoke quite hotly for him: "We don't know enough about it yet to say, Mr. Taylor." He looked like a boy of about twelve who is hurt over something but trying not to show it.

Then I had an idea that I might still be able to save some fun out of the day. I asked Victoria to come to Pathoda with me. We would go on the motor-bike. She thought about it a minute, and nodded, and I slapped her on the back. I said: "Good girl! Come on!" I got up right away and went to the door, but she turned to say goodbye to Kasel. There was no need for her to do that.

The ride was hot and dusty. I drove fast because I was in a hurry to get up there, get the work over with, and get on with our picnic. We could bathe at Pathoda. We roared past everything—villagers on foot, bullock carts, children playing among houses, old women and

In some ways, she was a stranger. "I feel as if you've just come out from Home," I said. Victoria snapped back: "Don't call England 'Home'! It isn't *our* home, is it?"

Four novels—and thirty-one more to come

Masters—no takers for the Himalayas...

AT THIRTY-NINE, after only four books, John Masters, author of *Bhowani Junction,* is established as a major novelist. Yet, six years ago, as an ex-Indian Army colonel and Chindit commander—he won the D.S.O. with Wingate—he was planning his future on vastly different lines.

He went to America to organize a Himalayan expedition. He found no takers, but a chance conversation prompted him to send an article to a New York magazine. It was accepted. His new career had begun.

As the fifth generation of a family to serve in India, Masters had a wealth of material. He sketched the plots of thirty-five novels about the Savage family, based loosely on his own family history. His aim: to tell the story of the British in India.

The first novel, *Nightrunners Of Bengal,* was an immediate success. So were the next two, *The Deceivers* and *The Lotus And The Wind.* And now, with *Bhowani Junction*—a Book Society Choice and Book of the Month Club selection in the U.S.A.—he moves into the best-seller class.

Married, with two children, Masters lives in a farmhouse an hour's drive from New York City.

I was in a flaming rage. My fist was swung back to hit him when a voice said: "That's enough!" It was like an electric shock. I turned my head. A young English officer stood coolly beside me

donkeys. The exhaust made a terrific racket against the houses, and I felt a lot better.

Pathoda Station is on a curve and you couldn't at first see anything wrong with the train. But when we got up past the end of the platform, twisted rails stuck out like wires from under the tender and the first few wagons.

A group of railway people stood in a bunch round it, and thirty or forty villagers were squatting on the low embankment opposite.

I went over to the district engineer. He was examining a couple of fish-plates which had been loosened on the inside of the curve. It looked like sabotage, all right. There wasn't much I could do, and soon I went back to Victoria.

"There's nothing for me to do here," I said. "I knew there wouldn't be. Why don't we have our picnic here? A little farther away from the bridge, of course."

She looked at the water below the railway bridge and she hesitated. She never used to hesitate so much, to think so carefully about what she was doing or going to do. Then she said: "All right." I hurried back to fetch our bathing togs from the motor-bike.

Some way downstream we found a nice pool, about ten feet across, and there was a little waterfall at the top. It was a good place for a cool bathe. We changed in the bushes, and bathed.

Later, when it wasn't so hot and we were back in our clothes, I leaned over and kissed her. I loved her so much I thought I would melt inside

She kissed me back, then she turned her head away and looked up at the sky through the leaves. We could hear the clanking and banging from the bridge, but we couldn't see them and they couldn't see us. I stroked her cheek with my hand and said: "I love you, Victoria."

She looked at me, and I waited for her to say: "I love you, too, Patrick," but she didn't say that. She said: "Do you think I've changed?"

She hadn't changed to look at, except that she was smarter, more English-looking, somehow. But she *had* changed. She spoke la-di-da like the British officers in the regiments, and she didn't smile so much. She looked at you without saying anything, often, and when she was standing up she stood up straight and tall to her full height. It struck me that she was thinking all the time, and noticing us and her home and her people as if she'd never seen us before.

I said: "I feel as if you've just come out from Home."

She snapped: "Don't call England 'Home.' It's not *our* home, is it?" Then she put her hand over mine and said: "I'm sorry, Patrick dear. I'm tired. Let me go to sleep."

I didn't know what was the matter with her. She was twenty-eight then, and she couldn't go on being a spinster much longer. I'd known her all her life. Before she went off to the army we'd been practically engaged. She must have got leave during all those years, but she only came down to Bhowani once. The war was over, and I loved her, and she wouldn't find anyone with better pay or prospects than me—not to marry her, that is.

I thought, she'll settle down in a few days or a few weeks. After all, she's just come back from the army and being an officer and mixing with nobody but British officers. I was ready to wait a bit.

The next day was Sunday, and Victoria asked me round to dinner at their house, and afterwards we were going to the pictures. They were in the parlour—Mrs. Jones, Rose Mary and Victoria. Mr. Jones was on 21 Down. He was a senior driver.

Rose Mary smiled at me a lot and called me "Paddy" and, once, "darling." I was glad when dinner was ready.

As soon as we sat down, Rose Mary asked me whether anything had been settled about Sir Meredith Sullivan's visit to Bhowani. Sir Meredith Sullivan was the most important Anglo-Indian there was, a member of the Legislative Assembly in New Delhi.

"Who is he going to stay with?" Rose Mary asked.

"Williams," I told her.

"Williams!" she cried, putting down her knife and fork and staring at me. "But Paddy, there are—oh, many people senior to Williams. There is O'Hara and Fitzpatrick and—my God—Pater—and you."

I knew all that, and Williams was only the assistant superintendent of railway police, but what could I do? Sir Meredith had telegraphed that he would like to stay with the Williamses. He had been a great friend of Mrs. Williams's father.

"Oh, it is a disgrace!" Rose Mary cried. "Mrs. Williams will be more stuck-up than ever!"

I noticed that Victoria listened to us in the new way she had, as if she had never heard such talk before. I said: "There will be a whist drive, and Sir Meredith Sullivan is going to give us a talk." I explained that the talk was going to be about St. Thomas's.

When I mentioned St. Thomas's, Victoria said thoughtfully: "I suppose the Presidency Education Trust will have to close it. It's sad, though."

I stared at her. "Close it? Close St. Thomas's? They can't! Why, that was my old school."

"I know, Patrick," she said. "You've got the tie on now." I had. It has blue, yellow and violet stripes. She said: "But—things are going to change, aren't they? They *are* changing. . . ."

She spoke quite vehemently all of a sudden. "We think God fixed everything in India so it can't alter. The English despise us, but need us. We despise the Indians, but we need them. So it's all been fixed—the English say where the trains are to go to, and we take them there, and the Indians pay for them and travel in them. What do you think will happen after the English have gone?"

Now she was getting excited, and her eyes sparkled, and she didn't talk la-di-da, she talked the way we do.

But I wasn't going to be sidetracked. Victoria talked as if we Anglo-Indians could change, but we couldn't. This business of St. Thomas's explained exactly what I felt.

What the Education Trust was saying to us was this: "St. Thomas's doesn't pay its way. It survives only because the Provincial Government gives it more help from provincial funds than it's really entitled to, considering the number of boys it educates. An Indian government will come to power soon. Is it likely that they will continue to give special help to the education of Anglo-Indians? Of course

Continued on page 32

REACH FOR THE SKY: Part 3 of Paul Brickhill's moving human story of a legless man's triumph over his disability

Bader stumbles on—each step a torment

THE CAR WHICH WAS CARRYING Douglas Bader back from the artificial limb makers at Roehampton pulled up in front of the R.A.F. hospital at Uxbridge. An orderly hastened forward to help him out. Bader, wearing his two new artificial limbs laced to the remaining stumps of his legs, was feeling smugly proud, like a girl in a new party dress which is bound to be noticed. As the orderly started fussing at his elbow, Bader pushed him away and lurched with tense concentration about six paces to the door.

Standing there talking to another doctor was the wing commander who had once ticked him off for being late at lunch. The wing commander briefly turned his head, said curtly: "You ought to have a stick, Bader," and turned back to the other doctor. Bader tottered angrily through the door, praying that he would not fall.

Since losing his legs (the right one had been amputated above the knee, the left a few inches below) when he crashed his plane in December, 1931, some months before, Bader had determined to make no concession to his disability. Before the crash he was, at twenty-one, an outstanding athlete and sportsman, a dashing pilot who already showed exceptional promise. His former prowess in the air and on the sports field only acted as a goad to a natural instinct in him never to let anything—or anyone—beat him. Now that he had got over the shock of losing his legs, he looked on the future as a challenge that was almost exciting.

Use a stick? Not likely! At Roehampton the limb makers had suggested the same thing. "You'll never walk again without a stick," they said, for no legless man ever had. Well, he, Bader, was going to do so. More than that, he was determined to master those artificial legs of his so that he could dance, swim, play tennis, drive a car like any man with normal legs. Above all else, he was going to fly again.

Still smarting from the wing commander's remark, Bader stumped into the dining-room. There were roars of welcome and ribald remarks from the other patients. Streatfeild bawled: "Long John's got his ruddy undercarriage back." He walked across to them, concentrating too much to make any answer and feeling that he was going to spoil his entrance at any moment by making a three-point landing and

"If I ever marry," Bader said as he lay legless in hospital, "it's got to be to someone I meet for the first time just as I am now." Soon after, while he battled to walk again, he met that "someone" at a country café. He was too shy then to ask the name of the girl who was to be his wife. This postwar picture shows the Baders and their dog

denting his tail-skid. One of them pulled out a chair and he just made it. Lunch was eaten in great jollity.

"No doubt any moment now you'll be wanting to dash off for tea at the Pantiles," Streatfeild suggested banteringly. (There was a girl who served at the Pantiles—a country café near Bagshot—whose charm and manner had greatly impressed Bader. He had first met her after his accident and had seen her several times since, but he had been too shy even to ask her name.)

"Not on your life," Bader replied. "I'm going to learn to walk on these pins first. The next time I go I'll be driving my own car."

Stairs Seemed Too Steep

His ward was on the first floor and after lunch he tottered out to the stairs. They looked appallingly high and steep, but he dragged himself up and was sweating at the top. In the ward he tried to give a demonstration of walking, lurching a precarious way from bed to bed, grabbing each bed-rail as he reached it, and encouraged by cheerful barracking from patients in the beds. But after a few minutes he was so tired he could hardly stand and the right stump was trembling and aching with weakness.

He tried again an hour later but after one circuit sweat was soaking him all over and the right stump was threatening to collapse under him, the muscles shrunken, weak and flabby after so long without use. He was beginning to realize that it was not going to be so easy and for the rest of the day he relaxed to give the stumps a chance to recover.

At dinner-time he was able to struggle downstairs, but when he went to climb back he just could not do it; the strength was drained out of him and he was aching all over. A burly orderly carried him up—Bader's arms round his neck, body dangling over his back—and lowered him on to his bed. Lying there, Douglas undressed and with enormous relief unstrapped his harness and carefully leaned the legs against the wall where they would be nicely within reach. He thought it was smart of him to remember that, but the thought was interrupted by a minor clatter as the legs fell over on to the floor, looking obscene and disembodied with shoes and socks on. Too tired to pick them up, he swore and crawled between the sheets.

He Refused To Be Carried

Shortly another thought stirred. Damn! He hadn't cleaned his teeth. Oh, let it go till morning for once. A little later he came out of a doze wanting to go to the toilet. Damn! He'd forgotten that, too. Well, it would *have* to wait till morning. Sinking down again he wanted to blow his nose and found he did not have a handkerchief. That was the last straw and he started muttering unprintably. In that mood there was not going to be any sleep and at last he testily stretched out for his legs but could not reach them on the floor.

He rang for an orderly who picked them up and offered to carry him, but no—he laboriously strapped on all the harness, got a handkerchief, tottered into the bathroom and did all he wanted to, then tottered back to bed, making sure this time that the legs stood up within reach.

Very tired, he was drifting off to sleep when he began to feel thirsty. Firmly he put it out of his mind and rolled over, but the desire for a drink of water crept insidiously back, and the more he tried to forget it the more he wanted a drink and the angrier he became. Damn and blast! No drink—no sleep, that was obvious. But he was damned if he was going to strap that harness on again. Tossing the blankets back, he lowered his rump on to the floor by taking his weight with hands on the bed and the bedside table. Then swinging himself along on his hands and bottom he got to the bathroom.

Then he couldn't reach the tap.

Muttering, he pulled a stool across, hoisted his rump on to it with a hand on the edge of the bath, took a drink from a tooth-glass and "walked" on hands and rump back to his bed where, with a last strenuous effort, hands on bedside table and bed, he hoisted himself back on to the sheet. Temper cooling off as he drifted tiredly into sleep, he realized that going to bed would have to be an organized ritual before removing the legs.

In the morning as he woke he remembered with satisfaction that he was mobile and, after the previous night's lesson, lay a while planning procedure. Was it worth putting on his legs to walk to the bath, taking them off and putting them on again afterwards? No. He went to the bathroom on his rump and put his legs on afterwards. Clutching the banister rail, he "dot-and-carried" alone down the stairs to breakfast and after that teetered out into the garden. Here he got another shock as he stepped on to a patch of grass and instantly felt as dismayingly insecure as the first time he had stood on the legs.

It was fairly level grass, but it was no firm level floor and he felt that he would topple if he moved. He took a step, the right toe immediately hit a clump of grass and he pitched forward—his first fall. He took the shock on his hands. That part was all right, but now he had to get up again. He lay for a while thinking about it. A man came running up and said sympathetically: "Hang on to me, old boy. Soon have you up."

"Go away," he snapped. "I'll do this."

Like A Novice On Skates

He took his weight on his hands and lowered the rear weight on to his left knee, then pushed hard. In a moment he had fallen back on his hands again. He tried again, pushing up on the left toe, straightening his left knee, and pushing his hands back towards the toe, and came uneasily but without too much difficulty to his feet again. Then he took another step and fell again.

That morning he fell at least twenty times but managed to stumble up and down the grass again and again, arms flailing to keep his balance like a novice on ice skates, but persisting until his legs were aching and trembling with exhaustion again. Worse, the right stump was sore in spots—obviously chafing. The difficulty of walking on anything but the smoothest floor was worrying him. That was the worst part of all. There would be more rough paths than smooth paths in life, and the airy confidence he had had was rattled.

After lunch he got the orderly to carry him upstairs to the ward where he practised from bed-rail to bed-rail again. Soon he was in agony from the chafed right stump and had to struggle to his bed. Unstrapping all the harness and taking off the stump sock he found that the skin round the groin was rubbed raw in a couple of places. If the future was going to be like that. . . .

With a sudden idea he called an orderly to bring him some sticking plaster and taped it over the raw parts, put his legs on and tried again. It was a little better, but then the whole stump was so stiff and sore that it was hard to tell which part hurt most. That evening a nurse put some of her cold cream on the raw patches and it was very soothing.

Had No Fear Of Falling

In the morning a car drove him back to Roehampton. "I thought you'd be back about this time," said Desoutter, the artificial limb maker. "Let's have a look at those stumps." He, and his assistants, Tulitt and Walker, spent about two hours adjusting the sockets of the legs. "Remember it's darned hard for you to tell yet whether there's anything wrong with the fit," Desoutter observed. "They'll feel awful for a while, anyway, like false teeth when you first put them in. Later, you'll know in a moment if anything is not fitting."

Bader returned to Uxbridge to try again, but the legs seemed no better. For two days he stumbled about, continually falling, curtly refusing any help and getting up unaided to lurch and fall again. As he did not fall on the stairs, where he had a banister on which to cling, the others kept suggesting he use a stick, but he refused tersely. From his experiences on the parallel bars as a schoolboy gymnast and from his years of playing rugby, he had no fear of falling and that was the big thing that helped. If he had worried about falling he would probably have been beaten.

Hour after hour he doggedly kept at it when other men would have given up to rest or despair. Moving the stiff, chafing and aching stumps was continual torment but he made himself keep on doing so, his face running with sweat that poured off all over him, soaking his underclothes and, unfortunately, the stump socks, too, so that they lost their woolly softness and began chafing again, rubbing the skin off in new spots. The good-humoured barracking that had greeted his first efforts died away as people became aware that they were watching a man battling to do something that had never been done successfully before, with only his guts to help him and a crippled life ahead if he failed. It was something that could not be laughed off.

Refusing to accept that it was impossible kept him going. He insisted that he *knew* he could learn to manage the legs with practice. In a way he was like a man trying to run before he could walk, because he would *not* stop trying and the right stump was not strong enough to take the punishment. The more he forced himself to walk the more it hurt, tending to become

Bader spent many happy days convalescing in the international and secretary of the Harlequins, for

home of Audrey and Adrian Stoop, a famous rugby whom Bader had played before he lost his legs

Group Captain Harry Day—Bader's squadron leader in 1931—with his wife. It was at their home that Bader tried his first swim without legs. With typical daring he dived in from a springboard

a vicious circle and making it even more difficult. Now and then he *had* to rest a little because the stump would not hold him, and then he tried again.

Soon, stumps plastered like a quilt, a car took him to Roehampton again, where Desoutter found that the right thigh seemed to have shrunk. In due course, he said, they would rivet the metal a little tighter, and meanwhile he slipped a second stump sock over it.

That felt better, and then Desoutter found a hard muscle developing at the back of the thigh, and with a little hammer Tulitt tapped out an almost imperceptible indentation in the metal to accommodate it. To reduce sweat and chafing Desoutter suggested keeping both stumps well powdered. Then Walker lacquered the leather socket of the left leg so that the sides would not hold perspiration. Bader found it fascinating to watch their ingenious approach to each new problem.

"There Aren't Any Textbooks . . ."

But the main problem, the sheer clumsiness, they could not help. Desoutter, who had noticed the new grimness in Douglas, said: "Look, in this business I've seen that only people who've actually lost a leg can know the shock of awkwardness when they first try an artificial one; it's just a thing they have to work on till they develop a new skill. Most of them take months to learn. Some never do. In a way it's like a chap starting to play tennis from scratch and having to work up to Wimbledon standard. Chaps who lose one leg have still got a good one to rest and hop on and an ankle and toe to give them spring when they're walking. You haven't, so you've just got more to learn. And it's still harder for you because there's no one with no legs to teach you. There aren't any textbooks, either."

Back at Uxbridge he kept trying, but it seemed impossible to acquire balance and natural movement, and still he kept falling. Gradually he found the right stump did not ache so much, as the flabby muscles hardened with use and the chafing came under control. But that eased only the pain; the legs were as unwieldy as ever, yielding no fraction to practice and bringing growing disillusionment and anguish.

Mentally, it was the worst time since the accident. His nature, in any case, rejected defeat, and now the menacing implications produced obsession to master the legs. The others learned not to try to help him up or steady him as he lurched, realizing it was a battle that he himself had to fight. Besides, trying to help only produced rebuffs. He wanted passionately to be independent as much as he wanted to be mobile. It goaded him to think of having to ask help in the simple, physical things of life and he shrank from the idea that people in due course would politely prefer to avoid him as being a nuisance.

He began dreaming about his legs again, not, as he did at Greenlands nursing home, about having his real legs back, but something more wickedly subtle. In these new dreams he had his artificial legs—he could see them and they had the nerveless artificial feel—but he was using them easily like his real ones, running around exuberantly, leaping up and down stairs and even, on one bitter-sweet occasion, kicking a football. Waking up was not pleasant.

And then, about ten days after he got his legs, he detected the first hint of automatic control. It was a little like a man learning a strange language that sounds like gibberish until one day he catches a phrase and understands it. As though some barrier had been removed, he began walking a little more easily and after that the improvement was rapid. In five days he was lurching about without having to concentrate so hard either on movement or balance; some automatic instinct seemed to have taken over part of the work.

Off For A Spin In His Car

It was not easy, far from it. He still fell, but not so often. The stumps still chafed, but not badly, and they did not ache or twinge any more. The legs still felt uncomfortable when he strapped them on, but after a few minutes he became a little more used to them, though the harness remained as irksome and uncomfortable as ever. Best of all was the change in his mental climate as hope, a little qualified, came back. It was strengthened when he went all through one day without falling and also learned to turn by spinning on his right heel.

He telephoned the garage at Kenley where his M.G. was stored and asked them to drive the car over (the doctors gave him permission to have it—good occupational therapy, they said).

"Off to see the girl at the Pantiles?" Streatfeild asked, and he nodded.

"Ah, well, jolly good luck to you. I kept

Continued on page 27

Mr. Hardy, darling

by ***MARIAN GAVIN***

ILLUSTRATED BY TANAT JONES

Pity poor Lewis Hardy! His mind was on supersonic flight. But a woman's mind—as he had to learn—went twice the speed of sound

He felt two gentle, appealing fingers on his cheek. "Darling, please," she said. "Just for me"

OUTSIDE, IT WAS SPRING with its usual urgencies and quickenings, its mad, tender upheaval of all the kingdoms—vegetable, mineral and especially animal. It was spring, but within the chill, windowless world of the Harper - Hindley Aircraft Company there were few who remembered. Especially the members of Harper-Hindley's Experimental Group.

Behind a guarded door, they lived in a top-secret tomorrow. Some, like Lewis Hardy, had even been accused of living in the day after tomorrow.

This day of spring, Lewis was at his desk, engaged in what might have been a complicated equation. Actually, it was no more than a high-class doodle, because Lewis was listening to a conversation going on inside the semi-partitioned private office two desks away. This conversation was between Mr. Hardlet, chief of Experimental, and his second-in-command, Mr. Champion, who was presenting for the chief's approval the group's latest report.

Ordinarily, Lewis neither doodled nor listened in to conversations. But today he was incapable of keeping his ears to himself. It wasn't that the report had his name on it; it had Mr. Champion's. The second-in-command had, in his own words, "gathered up and co-ordinated" Lewis's material. So Lewis sat in a fine sweat of maternal anxiety. By any other name, it was still his brain child.

It was difficult to hear well because, behind him, either Miss Greenway or Charlie Sharpe was using a calculator. It was probably Charlie, because whoever was there was whistling through his teeth, and little Miss Greenway never whistled. Mrs. Hubbard, the group secretary, was typing with the vigour usual to her when the chief was in his office.

As if that weren't enough, Lois entered just

then, bringing up the computed results. Lewis had known mixed feelings of joy and despair since Lois had come to them on temporary loan from Structures. She made him dream of a neat detached house, three to four bedrooms, of children and collie pups romping on a green lawn, and of how it would feel to come home to a fragrant rib roast cooked especially for him. . . .

She caught his eyes with her summer-sky blue ones and smiled. Together with the overall impact of cream-silk hair, curve-loving gaberdine and nylon, it almost deafened him.

But just then, conveniently, the chief's voice rose: "What about this third section, Champion? Looks interesting, but tell me what it says in a nutshell, will you?"

"I thought it was in a nutshell, Mr. Hardlet!" Hearty laughter from Mr. Champion, but no answering laughter from the chief. Mr. Champion's voice again, somewhat lower. "The fact is, I handed the detail, routine stuff to Hardy. It's a little difficult to—but give me a minute, Mr. Hardlet."

Lewis's doodle went through the paper. Mr. Champion was going to try to amplify Lewis's beautiful, precocious third section — Span Efficiency as a Function of Mach Number.

"Frankly, Mr. Hardlet, I was dubious about the presentation on this, but Hardy seemed to think—well, I thought I'd leave it to you. And since you think it's in too small a nutshell——"

"I didn't say that!" The chief's tone was cold. "Just bring me your work sheets on it. Or bring in Hardy!"

Two things happened simultaneously, one on each side of Lewis.

On his left, Miss Greenway quietly laid Lewis's Section Three work sheets on his desk. Never had he known a girl so attuned to his every need, a girl with such uncanny intuition, such selfless efficiency, such. . . .

On his right, Lois arrived with the computed results. Her blue eyes swivelled towards the chief's office, her coral lips emitted an excited whisper: "Darling, your chance."

Lois was ambitious for him. Quite naturally. Quite understandably. Still, Lewis felt himself flushing as Mr. Champion emerged from the private sanctum.

"Hardy." The pear-shaped face shone faintly with perspiration. "Would you get me the work sheets on that third section of the report?"

"Right here, Mr. Champion." With only a slight tremor, Lewis handed over the remainder of his brain child.

IN the silence that followed Mr. Champion's disappearance, Lewis realized he hadn't yet thanked Miss Greenway for rising to the emergency. He turned and she smiled faintly at his nod of appreciation. She looked very young in her white blouse. With her dark good-child bangs, inscrutable grey eyes and short, stubborn nose, she looked like a little girl playing secretary.

If only everyone in the group were as pleasant, as co-operative, as diligent as Miss Greenway. As quiet and intelligent and capable. Charlie was capable enough when it served his purposes to be. But Charlie, who, by hook, crook and transfer, had used a shaky engineering B.Sc. to reach his present relatively exalted position as Lewis's assistant, had been rendered cynical and irreverent in the process.

Several times Lewis had been shocked to hear him refer to the head of the company, Gordon Hindley himself, as "an old Jessie." Charlie was openly scornful of anyone who let himself be "pushed around." In a quick flash of realization, Lewis thought, *I'll bet he calls me an old Jessie.*

Slowly, he took out his vacuum flask of coffee and gulped a scalding cupful. Maybe it was the coffee, or more likely the charred egg and underdone bacon prepared for him this morning at the caféteria on the road to the factory. At any rate, Lewis felt, all of a sudden, an overwhelming sense of inadequacy.

In hurt bewilderment, he stared at the paperweight on his desk. A boyhood gift from his grandfather, it was one of those heavy glass globes containing, in this case, a gravely joyous little boy and girl sliding on a toboggan down a snowy hillside. He had always liked to look at it, the two happy children in their little glass world. But now it only deepened his loneliness.

That evening, late as usual, he hurried over to pick up Lois for their twice-weekly night out. But even in haste he was conscious of the homes he passed, and it was borne in upon him how lucky he was to have a girl like Lois and a home of his own in the offing.

His ardour was somewhat damped after ten minutes in the austere reception room of the boarding house where Lois lived. But then Lois came down wearing a flame-coloured dress of some soft, clinging stuff, and his pulse leaped. She gave him a sweet, forgiving smile and, though he didn't know for what she was forgiving him this time—she was always forgiving him for something—it was very nice.

"Darling," she said. "Let's go to the Coq d'Argent."

"But. . . ." He had intended taking her to Barrington's, as usual. Tactfully, he pointed out that Barrington's steaks were superior to those at the Coq d'Argent.

Lois admitted it. But she still wanted to dine at the Coq d'Argent.

She touched his cheek with soft, red-nailed fingertips. "Darling, please. Just for me. We'll go Dutch, if you'd rather."

She was so sweet, so thoughtful, but he couldn't help stiffening. "I'll take you to the Coq d'Argent," he said a bit loudly, kissing two pounds ten goodbye, trying not to mind so much.

LOIS went with the restaurant's décor like fire to a hearth. She was lovely in the dim glow of the table candles, but it was like a celebration with nothing to celebrate, unless she was going to name the day she would marry him. And then she leaned across the table.

"Darling, guess what? There's a very good chance I'll get Sarah's job—she's getting married on Friday, you know. Think of it! I'll be secretary to the chief of Structures!" She paused, eyes sparkling. And then a little frown grew between her silken brows. "Lewis, why are you looking at me like that?"

But he wasn't seeing her at all. He was seeing another Lois in a ruffled apron, deftly sliding a rib roast out of the oven. A beautiful picture, but it was fading.

"I thought you were going to stop working," he said dully. "You were going to leave when we got married."

"Of course, darling, if you insist. But. . . ." She looked at him with sweet, thoughtful eyes. "Do you think it's wise? I mean, you're wonderful, but sometimes I don't think you care about getting ahead. You're so busy up there in the clouds that sometimes you don't—darling, wouldn't it be safer to keep two salaries in the family instead of one?"

She was so sweet, so beautiful, so reasonable that it was a pity she was also incomprehensible. "But I had imagined you keeping house. Cooking."

"Darling." She spread her hands in lovely helplessness. "I don't know how to cook." When he said nothing—what could he say?—she straightened. "But if it means so much to you, I'll learn."

Staring miserably at her brave, uplifted face, he protested: "But I don't want you to work all day in an office and cook, too. That wasn't what I——"

"But, darling, I will!" she declared gaily. "I'll buy myself an overall and make an adventure of it."

She was so gallant she tore his heart into little

His vision cleared and he saw Miss Greenway. She looked pretty, but concerned. "Mr. Hardy," she said, "I think you had better eat this"

pieces. He knew he had never loved her so much.

He was late to work next morning. His head felt like a balloon filled with stones and he was burdened with a vague apprehension. Going up the stairs to the second floor, he encountered Miss Greenway.

"Good morning, Mr. Hardy." She was carrying a packet of sandwiches. He remarked that it would appear she didn't like the works canteen either. She admitted she didn't. In fact, if it weren't so far, she'd go home for lunch. The way she said "home"—he felt a sense of warmth and kinship between them. Her dawn-grey eyes were on a level with his lapel. Funny, he'd never realized how small Miss Greenway was. Or, for that matter, how big he was. The beret went well with her dark hair. He liked it. Why didn't all girls wear berets?

HE was barely inside the office when Charlie Sharpe came up, eyes shining like obsidian in his tanned, well-barbered face. "The axe has fallen," Charlie said in sepulchral tones.

"What do you mean?"

"Mr. Champion is no longer with us. They do tell me you can't find a trace of him anywhere, he was axed so clean and quiet."

A heaviness settled on Lewis. In the midst of his concern for the departed, he was aware of Charlie's grinning obeisance. "Good morning, Mr. Assistant Chief, sir. And what is your pleasure today?"

When Lewis looked at him blankly, Charlie's

Continued on page 41

Inspector Watson keeps poison off the menu

by ANTONY FERRY

Almost every kind of food comes under his expert eye. He seeks the hidden menace that may put scores in hospital

EIGHTY MEN SAT DOWN to a luncheon several years ago to welcome new members to their Freemason's lodge in Salford, near Manchester. Each guest ate a meal of roast chicken, listened to a round of speeches and then returned to work. Seven days later, two of them died.

Before the coroner had traced the cause of death, forty more members were rushed to hospital. Manchester Corporation markets department, which inspects most of the food eaten by the fifteen million people within a radius of seventy-five miles, began an investigation. Alfred Norman Watson, a bronzed and curly-haired meat inspector, was called in with ten of his colleagues.

Records for the entire consignment of poultry were checked. They showed that several carcasses, all possibly contaminated, had been sent by a breeder and passed as wholesome by the inspectors.

Manchester began to prepare itself for a major epidemic. Then the coroner attributed the two deaths to a rare kind of typhoid. At once, investigation took a new turn. Typhoid is not an animal disease, and Watson and his colleagues reasoned that, after the poultry had been inspected, some external factor must have caused the deaths.

After an hour's questioning, the man who had roasted the chicken admitted that he had once been in hospital with typhoid and that for three days he had been afraid to confess it. His medical case-history was immediately found and the exact nature of the bacillus determined. Within a few days the forty Freemasons had been treated and were recovering.

Housewife's First Defence

"Anthrax and botulism—two diseases that are transferable to humans and are often fatal—can be present in meat," says Watson. "Others are tuberculosis, dropsy, pleurisy, mastitis and countless minor ailments. But because few people realize the peril lurking between the lines of the menu, treatment can be too late."

For this reason, Watson and his colleagues all over Britain are the housewife's first line of defence. In Manchester alone, more than half a million carcasses of meat, a million poultry, rabbits and game, and thousands of tons of fish are inspected every year. In 1952, more than three million pounds of unfit meat were condemned. Without this service, which began in 1875, there might be a return of epidemics on a medieval scale.

Manchester Corporation employs about 150 people to inspect food. Watson is one of twelve men who pass meat as it is slaughtered in the corporation's abattoir.

Once, a wholesale butcher was preparing a consignment of home-reared meat when Watson arrived unannounced. Some of the meat had already been loaded into vans, but he quietly insisted on seeing everything. Suspecting anthrax, a disease that can be fatal in a matter of hours, he called in a Ministry of Agriculture inspector to support him. The entire consignment was condemned.

Next day, the wholesaler threatened a writ for unlawful condemnation and £1,000 damages. But Watson was firm.

Later, after he had heard the wholesaler's version, a magistrate pronounced his judgment. "This is the worst case of unsound food that I have met in forty years on the Bench," he said. When the wholesaler tried to protest, he was fined £180.

His Ambition Was Aroused

Watson himself is the fourth-generation member of a line of County Durham butchers. His father owned a chain of six shops near Sunderland, and did his own buying, slaughtering, dressing and selling. Watson insists that any man who does less is not a butcher—"he is simply a purveyor of meat."

One day he was helping in his father's shop when a prosperous-looking man came in, wearing a white smock, carrying a cane and smoking a good cigar.

"Who's that man?" young Watson asked his father.

"That would be a good job for you," he was told. "The man's a meat inspector."

Alfred Watson spent four years in becoming a qualified sanitary inspector before he could take his father's advice. After another two years specializing in meat he was appointed meat inspector for Sheffield. Six years later, in 1934, he went to Manchester.

On a routine job, Watson once called at a canned goods warehouse and was greeted by the owner, an old friend, with a reassuring nod. "No need to waste your time here, Watson," he said. "Everything is perfectly above board." But as Watson was escorted down the aisles between mountains of crated tins, he pointed left and right briskly. "This—and this—all that over there—it will have to go."

Indignantly the owner turned on him. "But you haven't looked inside a single crate yet."

"I don't have to," said Watson. "All that food is bad; the fermentation has caused a gas to form inside each tin and made it bulge. The top of each crate is raised from its nails by nearly a quarter of an inch. It's an elementary deduction."

On another occasion, Watson was walking through a warehouse with a woman superintendent who protested when he condemned bags of flour and cereal without looking inside them. Watson pointed to faint powder rings around the base of each bag. They were the clues left by millions of tiny parasites that had worked their way outwards through the sacking and dropped to the floor, each bringing a tiny particle of grain as it fell. "Sweep it up tonight," Watson told the woman, "and it will be there again tomorrow."

Later, he took her to his office and showed her a sample of the cereal parasite through a microscope. "Under a strong lens," he says, "the parasite looked like a crab. The woman was horrified."

When Watson inspects meat in the slaughterhouses, he must look for any of thirty-three diseases and be able to detect signs of old age, degeneration and decomposition.

Many of the ailments are contagious; slaughtermen or inspectors who neglect a cut finger while examining diseased meat can become seriously infected. Watson washes his hands up to twenty times a day. A member of the staff caught skin tuberculosis when he forgot to wash his hands after inspecting a diseased carcass. He carelessly rubbed his ear, which became infected, and the disease continued to spread until he was treated.

Anthrax is the most dangerous hazard of the slaughterhouse. An inspector who finds it immediately notifies the slaughterman and the dresser and all three are inoculated. Several

Meat inspection has its dangers. Alfred Watson are contagious. He once condemned several van-

(in dark coat) washes his hands up to twenty times a day, for many animal ailments loads of meat infected with anthrax, and was threatened with a writ for £1,000 damages

On alternate weeks, inspectors tour city shops. Leonard Kirkham, market superintendent, calls at a market stall

years ago, a butcher died forty-eight hours after contracting the disease.

While he is inspecting, Watson's soft, reflective speech takes on the authority of a fully fledged pathologist. "Before an inspector can recognize what is abnormal in meat he has to have a thorough knowledge of the normal," he explains.

There is rarely more than a secondary clue to diseased meat. Wilfred Taylor, one of Watson's colleagues, once saw signs of fever in a carcass of beef. He travelled thirty miles to the breeder's farm and found that the animal had died with a ninety-pound calf three months overdue. Although the breeder knew that no animal dying a natural death is considered fit for human consumption, he had it dressed and sent to market. As a result of Taylor's investigation, the man was heavily fined.

Saved Precious Food In War

During the war, Watson and his colleagues saved millions of pounds of food that might otherwise have been condemned. Supplies from blitzed warehouses, army stores from the deserted field kitchens of Africa, and cargo from damaged ships came to the port of Manchester for the department's careful inspection. Foodstuffs were so precious that the inspector used new categories for doubtful salvaged goods. They allowed some to be used as human food if mixed with other ingredients to make a cooked and manufactured product, and passed the rest for animal consumption. They also acted as price enforcement officers for the two million rations of meat they inspected every week.

On alternate weeks, Watson leaves the slaughterhouse to inspect city shops. He covers the equivalent of one long street in an afternoon, making routine calls, investigating complaints from the public, and inspecting the food supplies of school canteens.

Some time ago, a woman called at his office with a plate of fish and chips swimming in vinegar. In the vinegar were minute white maggots, which had come from the vinegar-bottle at the fish and chip shop. The woman told Watson that she had taken the plate to her doctor, who had explained that the "vinegar eels" had bred in the vinegar barrel as a result of rotting foreign matter. "As soon as the doctor told me what it was," she added, "I came here. I can feel those things swimming inside me. What are you going to do about it?"

Watson got her to sit down, took the plate from her, and began to tell her stories about people who had come to him with less significant complaints. In an hour he had her laughing with him. Then he said: "It must be two hours since you ate that fish. I assure you that if you *did* eat any of the vinegar eels, your gastric juices would have completely destroyed them by now." He promised to call at the fish shop with a copy of the Health Act. The woman left, completely satisfied.

Looking through the stores of a school canteen several years ago, Watson found a large tin of ham that appeared to be blown. He tapped it with his finger and asked for it to be opened. He found that the meat had not simply gone bad in the tin—something was drastically wrong with the way it had been pickled or processed.

He traced the wholesaler and at his depot found four hundred pounds of the same product, unfit for human consumption. When the man refused to believe him, Watson wrote to the exporter in Paris. "It is incredible," he was told. "We have been making canned ham in the same way for twelve years without complaints."

But Watson insisted on an investigation, and a week later he was proved right. The exporter had discovered that the men on the night shift had been increasing the cooking temperature to hasten the process and save an hour for a game of cards before the morning shift came on. They were dealt with by the firm.

During the war Watson tackled his most difficult case. He spent a week surveying the premises of a retail butcher suspected of having a private and unauthorized meat supply, but every time he arrived, no matter at what hour of the day, he found everything in order.

"It wasn't simply that black-marketing was unpatriotic," says Watson. "We had to get the man because the meat he was selling wasn't being inspected."

Secret Cold-room Was Empty

One day, the butcher was seen backing his van into a barn at a lonely farm and loading it with a carcass of freshly killed meat. As soon as Watson heard about this, he called at the shop, but again found no unauthorized meat. Baffled, he went home and that night mentioned the case to his wife.

The following day, acting on his wife's theory, he was back at the shop with a few of his colleagues. They found a secret cold-room in the cellar, but it was empty.

Watson suspected that the butcher had been warned about the raid and asked if he could inspect the rooms over the shop.

"You can't go up there," the butcher said. "I rent that flat to a young married couple and their invalid mother-in-law. The old lady's in bed and you can't disturb her."

Watson and his men ignored him and visited the flat anyway. They found the "invalid mother" in bed—a carcass of beef dressed in nightgown and cap. THE END

Happy holidays are Margery Caddington's worry

by DON EVERITT

She works hard to give her tireless tourists a gay time on the Continent. Her biggest problems? Rescuing people who walk into trouble—and having to play Cupid

TWO SHY SISTERS arrived one day last summer at Lugano, Switzerland, among a party of holidaymakers. Margery Caddington, the travel agency hostess who met the party, made a quick mental note of their demeanour, and a few hours later discovered them standing aimlessly in the hotel foyer. Before dinner, the hostess planned a ruse.

She told the girls, apologetically, that the only two places left in the dining-room were at different tables. As a special favour she asked if they would mind separating. Not at all, the sisters said. Among the people sitting at each table was an eligible young man.

"By the end of their holiday, which both girls enjoyed immensely, one of the partnerships was firmly cemented," says Miss Caddington. "I've since heard that the couple are likely to marry soon."

Acting as matchmaker is only one of Margery Caddington's duties as a hostess. Throughout the season, she is also guide, financial adviser, conciliator, weather forecaster, dance hostess and even nurse to a clientele which runs into thousands and includes doctors, factory girls, farmers, secretaries, wealthy widows and coal miners.

"No other country has a holiday exodus comparable with ours," she says. Last year, a million people from Britain spent their holidays on the Continent. This year there will be at least a hundred thousand more. At some stage of their holidays, most of these people have the services of travel agency hosts, hostesses, guides or couriers.

Girl Stumbled Round The Room

Forty-two year old Margery Caddington is one of sixty-two hostesses stationed by a leading travel agency at a string of resorts stretching from Norway to Spain. Their specific responsibility is the welfare of clients who take "inclusive price" holidays, travelling in special trains and staying at hotels partially or fully booked by the agency for a season.

Once, Miss Caddington was called urgently to a hotel in Lugano and found one of her clients, a girl, weeping and stumbling about her room; she had gone blind. Miss Caddington at once called a doctor.

The case was not as bad as it seemed. Within two days, the doctor said, the girl would see again. During that time, however, she was to have treatment every two hours and was not to be left alone. Telling an assistant to take over the routine duties of her office, Miss Caddington

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Miss Caddington is guide, hostess, nurse and financial adviser to tourists. Before leaving for Interlaken, she solves a currency problem

As the boat cruises along Lake Lugano, Miss Caddington describes the scenery to members of her party. Once, a woman was so entranced by the view that she stepped straight into the water

stayed at the girl's side. She washed, dressed, undressed and fed her; she dosed her and put drops in her eyes, read to her and tried to keep her cheerful.

On the morning after the girl's sight returned, Miss Caddington called at the hotel. The porter greeted her with roars of laughter. At three that morning, he said, the girl had returned to the hotel, escorted by the same local Casanova who had been with her a few hours before she had gone blind.

"I'd felt sorry for the girl at first," Miss Caddington says. "The doctor had explained that the blindness almost certainly resulted from drinking wood alcohol, and I suspected that she had been deceived. But now she had been out again with this wolf, presumably to the same cheap dives, drinking the same poison. I was furious. I told the porter not to send for me if she went blind again. It's my job to make the holidaymaker's stay run smoothly and happily, but if people keep walking deliberately into trouble I can't waste time on them."

Trouble Takes Up Her Time

In ten years as a Continental hostess, Miss Caddington has generally found that quite enough of her time is spent with holidaymakers who walk into trouble unsuspectingly. When she took a party for a day out across Lake Lugano, a woman got so entranced by the view that she stepped absentmindedly ashore before the boat got there. Miss Caddington had to leave the rest of the party and return with the dripping, hysterical woman to Lugano.

Margery Caddington's routine duties as a hostess begin when she meets her clients at the station and sees them installed in their hotels. Every day she visits the hotels at specified times. Her daily round is largely concerned with tickets and booking lists, questions, problems and complaints.

A senior hostess, Miss Caddington works at the major holiday centres—Paris, Montreux, Lucerne, Lugano and, this year, Interlaken. At the start and close of the April-to-October season she usually has about thirty clients in her care each week; through the peak months of July, August and September, however, when two assistants join her, about three hundred wayward, inquisitive and seemingly tireless holidaymakers demand every moment of her time from nine in the morning to midnight. Sometimes, she gets called out long after midnight to soothe sunburn, or stomach-ache.

One afternoon last year, only half of a new party of holidaymakers arrived on the expected train. Miss Caddington met every subsequent train until late in the evening, then learned that the French rail strike had delayed the remaining passengers. Making a rough bed in a motor coach outside the station, she lay and waited.

Three times she got up to meet trains, but her clients were not on board. Finally, at five in the morning, they arrived. Ushering them off to their hotels, Miss Caddington left herself just enough time to have a wash and get her breakfast before going to the office. Every alternate night until the strike ended she had to keep a similar all-night vigil.

Though Margery Caddington's job is generally a full but happy routine, at Lugano two years ago she had a nerve-racking fortnight. At nine o'clock one morning she was called to a hotel where a man of forty-six was unwell. It looked like an ordinary stomach upset at first, but just after Miss Caddington left, the man's condition worsened. Five hours later he died of a stroke. Throughout the next week, Miss Caddington had to play her normal rôle of happy hostess with her other clients and at the same time comfort the widow. After attending the cremation, she helped the woman to pack her luggage, then saw her to the station.

Just as the train pulled out, a messenger rushed up with the news that some of Miss Caddington's clients had been in an accident on the Pillon Pass. She hurried there and found that a boulder had crashed on a coach, killing a clergyman and injuring several other passengers. For the next five days, she again had to play the incongruous dual rôle until the clergyman's widow left for home.

Nightmare Shortage Of Men

One of Miss Caddington's biggest problems results from the fact that more women than men take Continental holidays. "Finding sufficient men for an evening's dancing is sometimes a nightmare," she says. "I have to round up the office clerks, and any others I can find. To supplement these there are also the local wolves, who need no invitation: their weekly routine as the new girls arrive is most amusing."

Margery Caddington is probably the most experienced hostess working on the Continent today. She applied for the job after seeing another hostess at work during a Continental holiday in 1937. Her qualifications were near-perfect. She had "finished" at a Belgian convent, spoke fluent French, and had a smattering of German and Italian. She knew the Continent intimately, having travelled widely with her father. Furthermore, she was familiar with hotel routine because she had worked as a receptionist in London.

Her first appointment was in 1938. Next year she went to Paris. Then the war projected her into the A.T.S. as a messing officer. In 1946, she was one of the first hostesses to return to the Continent.

Most of her colleagues are in their mid-twenties. All, like her, are engaged by the season, which lasts from three to six months, depending on the resort. The hostesses are paid according to ability, experience and seniority. In addition, they get free passages to and from the resorts, free hotel accommodation throughout their stay, and a daily allowance. Some hostesses find it possible to save enough from their salaries to live through the winter without working; others have to find temporary jobs.

"Unfortunately," says Joseph Wadkin, the agency's holiday tours manager, "these girls get married sooner or later, and we are constantly having to replace them." Very occasionally, others have to be removed from their appointments because they get interested only in the romantic side of the job.

Fought "Duel" For Hostess

"If a hostess is working conscientiously," Margery Caddington says, "she has no time for men friends. Of course, there are some male guests who get the idea that the sole duty of the hostesses is to amuse them."

At a dance last year, a partially inebriated bachelor insisted that Margery Caddington dance continually with him. She politely declined, saying she had other guests to attend to. The man took her hand, but she pulled away from him. Another man, also intoxicated, came to her aid.

"Within a few minutes," she says, "the two of them had decided to fight in the gardens outside. It must have been the first duel ever fought over a holiday hostess. We all enjoyed it, and neither of the men got hurt because they were too drunk to hit straight." THE END

THE HELLCAT

by ***BARRY PEROWNE***

ILLUSTRATED BY HENRY SEABRIGHT

She tore at him with blind, savage fury. What kind of man was he who'd do nothing to resist?

I WAS THERE. I saw the thing done. It was about eleven o'clock of a *fiesta* night in this small town in Majorca, and I was sitting in a sagging cane chair under the patched awning of Diego's Café. It was stifling hot. There was a smell of dust from the cobbled street, the reek of a mule tethered to a tree nearby, and an all-pervading sweetness of flowers.

A man called Powner was sitting beside me. He was a landscape painter, a big, paunchy man with a sun-peeled nose and small, blue eyes, wearing a frayed panama. With a beer mug clamped in his hand and a cigar-stub eternally in his mouth, he droned away the hot afternoons and endless evenings under Diego's awning.

He was a gossip and a bore, and my eyes wandered to the town square, which lay fifty yards or so to the left down the slope of the street. Something seemed to be happening there. The din of guitars, tambourines and castanets was faltering. The dancers under the tinted bulbs looped from tree to tree, and the onlookers who sat round on the parapet of the dust-dry fountain and wielded their fans, all were turning their heads one way. They were looking at a man and a woman.

The man, wearing white slacks and a white shirt, was tall, loose-limbed and tanned, with cropped blond hair. He was about thirty. The woman was tall, too, with a fine figure and coppery hair, her skirt vividly striped, her Cordoba hat fallen back on its thong to her shoulders. She was raging drunk and screeching at the man like a virago.

THEIR names were Greg and Beryl, and I had seen them before, several times. Powner, who knew everything about the foreign element in the island, had told me that they had a cottage high up in the olive groves above the town, and that they mixed with nobody. I had seen them occasionally in the morning market, followed by a big, brindled, slant-eyed bull terrier as they went from stall to stall. According to Powner, Greg had written a play that had done fairly well; and once I'd seen him entering the shop of the only electrician in the town, carrying a tape-recorder, probably for repair. He was good-looking in a rather haggard way, and seemed a pleasant enough type. But Beryl, though colourful and striking, had shrewish lines about her mouth, and looked as hard as nails.

"Making a public exhibition of herself," growled Powner, beside me. "Why doesn't the fool get her away from there?"

Greg, in fact, made as though to take her arm and steer her clear of the crowd. She knocked his hand aside, struck him a vicious blow across the face. The act seemed to strip her of all control. She went berserk. She struck him across the face again and again, raging. His hands half lifted, as though to hold her off, but then dropped to his sides.

He just stood there and took it.

He took a storm of blows, the clawing of her nails down his face, her kicks, her shrieking of "Dog! Dog! Dog!" She hit him across the side of the head, she hit him across the mouth, she caught him by the shirt, she tore it open over his brown chest, she ripped it to dangling ribbons at his sides.

The wicked, wanton violence of it held the crowd stunned, gaping, the dancers with their arms still loosely about each other. Then a mutter of protest started, and swelled, and the whole crowd surged forward involuntarily. Two men leaped to pinion Beryl's arms. She seemed to sense their approach, spun round on them, thrust between them with a savage insolence. She walked straight at the crowd, which opened for her, staring, eddied behind her, hid her.

There was an instant of silence. All eyes were on Greg, standing there, tattered, blood-smeared, seemingly dazed. He moved. He took a step as though to follow Beryl, but his left leg appeared to buckle under him. He staggered and would have fallen, but the two men moved quickly and caught him. I saw them start up the slope towards us. They were bringing him here to Diego's.

ONE of the men I recognized as Dr. Valdes, the only doctor in the town, a big, dark, greying man in a sports shirt and white slacks. With the other man, he helped Greg inside the café, and I followed them in, instinctively. They sat Greg at a table, steadying him in the chair, his face in his hands.

"Brandy, Diego," the doctor said sharply.

Diego brought it. The doctor, taking the glass, tilted Greg's head back. His face was torn and bleeding, but that wasn't the worst of it. There was a look of absolute panic in his grey eyes, his mouth was working queerly, there was a convulsive jerking of his lower jaw. He thrust the glass aside, the brandy slopping. The muscles corded and strained in his neck. For some reason, I was the first to realize what was wrong with him, and I said so.

"He can't speak," I said. "He's been struck dumb."

I had spoken in English. Greg's eyes met mine. He nodded his head. I sensed the effort he was making to get a grip on himself. He ceased his tortured attempt at speech, motioned with his right hand on the table-top.

"A pencil?" I said, guessing.

He nodded again. I was wearing just a blouse and skirt and didn't carry a pencil. I explained in Spanish to the doctor. He took Greg's head between his hands, and with his thumbs twitched up the eyelids. Then he moved a hand to and fro, slowly, before Greg's eyes, then with a finger traced right up into the hairline a healed scar, razor-thin and very white on the tanned forehead.

Dr. Valdes straightened up, frowned, handed Greg a pencil. Greg took it, his hand shaking, and began to scrawl unsteadily on the table-top.

"Air crash three years ago," he wrote, in

The wicked, wanton violence of it held the crowd

English. "Loss speech, with much loss strength left arm and left leg, for ten months. This is a relapse. Nothing to be done except rest and hope for best. I'd be all right up in my cottage, if I could get up there. It's quiet."

I translated that for the doctor. He lifted Greg's left leg to a chair and, watching his eyes closely, began to prick with a pin up and down his left arm, his thigh, the back of his knee, his calf.

I noticed that Powner had vanished. He liked to talk scandal, but not to get mixed up in one, evidently.

As for me—well, I was twenty, taking a course at the Polyglot Institute in Paris, and was only in Majorca for a few weeks' holiday, but somehow I felt involved with Greg already. He seemed to me so alone and tragic, and the thought of Beryl made me burn.

The doctor, who had been scribbling in his notebook, tore out the page.

"Here, you, Pepe," he said to one of the ring of watchers, "take this to my house. Bring the things back here. *Anda, hombre!*"

I put a hand on Greg's shoulder. "He wants to go to his cottage, Doctor," I said. "What

stunned and gasping. She was suddenly a raging lunatic, kicking and shrieking, clawing at his face again and again. "Dog! Dog! Dog!" she screamed

do you think—should we let him go?"

Another of the onlookers, a gaunt man in a black alpaca suit and a beret, volunteered, "I know where his cottage is. His and mine are the only ones up in the high groves. I've my *burro* outside. We could get him home on that."

"There are no beds to spare in the hospital, anyway," Dr. Valdes said. He gave me a queer look. "What about his wife?"

I knew what he was thinking. He was thinking that Beryl had done Greg quite enough damage, without being given a chance to do more.

I said, "Greg, what's your wife likely to do now?"

He wrote on the table-top, "We had a disagreement. She's gone. She's not likely to return now—whatever the circumstances."

I translated that to the doctor, and he said dryly, "Well, he should know."

Pepe returned then, with the doctor's bag; and after dressing Greg's scratched face and giving him an injection, the doctor drew me aside while some of the men were helping Greg into the mule's saddle.

"You're going to see him home?" the doctor said. "Take some ice with you, for compresses for his head. That's important. You can get ice from Diego here. There's not really much can be done for your friend, as he knows himself. Rest, quiet, peace of mind. Sleep, above all. He's to take these pills."

"What are the chances of his getting his voice back?" I asked.

The doctor shrugged. "Who knows?"

So we took Greg home, following a dust-deep, stony trail that wound upward steeply through the olive groves.

I stayed that night at his cottage. It had just two rooms, a living-room and a bedroom, and I slept on a camp-bed that was in the living-room. The rooms were side by side, facing a tiny patio on which, when I wakened, I saw through the massive, studded front door, standing open, the sun blazing down. I rose—I had slept in my clothes—and walked out through the doorway in a blinding gulf of morning.

The tiny patio, edged by a foot-high stone parapet, whitewashed and clumped with cactus and scarlet geranium, stood high above the sea.

I looked over the edge. There was a sheer drop of about a hundred feet to the dusty trail. Below the trail, olive groves pitched in precipitous terraces another thousand feet down the mountainside to where wavelets broke glassily on an arc of beach and a couple of midget fishermen, with midget shadows, tended their nets. The sea stretched, a vacant and shining level, to infinity.

I turned and looked at the cottage. Just to my right, stone steps debouched on to the patio. Last night, leaving the mule on the trail below, we had struggled up those steps with Greg. There were a hundred or more of them, worn, uneven, weed-grown, tunnelled over by a tangled growth of rock-figs and pomegranates. The man who owned the mule, a charcoal-burner called Antonio Rullán, had told me that his own place was a mile or so farther on along the trail; he had suggested that, if necessary, his wife could come in for an hour or so daily and cook and clean for Greg.

Greg's cottage was probably four or five hundred years old, but it had electricity—as had even the remotest cottages in Majorca. The whitewashed walls were about four feet thick; the window apertures, one for the living-room, another—a little higher and to the left—for the bedroom, had no glass, just faded blue shutters, which were clipped open. Immediately behind

There were footsteps behind me, and the dog rose with a snarl. Greg caught its collar. "I've got a visitor for you," I said

the cottage, terraced groves climbed on steeply up the mountainside.

Over the groves the daylong shimmer of heat-currents already had started, and a deep hush brooded.

I was about to go back in, to take a look at Greg, when a feeling came over me that I was being watched. I looked round slowly. In the tawny patterning of sunshine and shade under the foliage that arched the head of the steps, someone was standing. I couldn't make out the figure clearly, but I saw the speckled shadow slither, and my throat went dry, because I thought this might be Beryl come back and I had no more idea how I should cope with that harpy than if she'd been a striped tigress lurking in a thicket.

But it was a man, a man in a white suit, who stepped out on to the patio. His black hair gleamed sleek as enamel in the sun; his eyes were pale slits in a hard-angled mahogany face. A second figure loomed at his back, a swarthy Civil Guard in dusty grey-green uniform and glazed black helmet, with a carbine slung over his shoulder.

I greeted them, but they stood looking at me in silence, while the man in white fitted a cigarette into a stubby holder.

"Who are you, señorita?" he said, at last. "What are you doing here?"

I told him.

He set his cigarette-holder between gold-flecked teeth. "Take me to your friend," he said.

I led the way, through the living-room, up six worn stone steps to a narrow arch in which hung a curtain of cane beads. The footsteps behind me stopped. I parted the curtain, looked in at Greg. He was propped up against pillows in the single bed, facing me. Strips of plaster were white against the brown of his face.

The brindled bull terrier sitting by the bed stood up, its hackles lifting, its upper lip wrinkling back in a snarl. Greg hooked his fingers in the dog's studded collar.

"I've got a visitor for you, Greg," I said, and the man in white stepped past me.

It was quickly evident why our visitor was here. He wanted details about Beryl's assault. He had been talking to the doctor. And this morning, we learned, Beryl had been prevented from boarding the first train to Palma, the capital of the island, and told to remain at the hotel where she had stayed overnight. The man in white asked many questions; he spoke English, and Greg wrote the answers on a pad he took from the bedside table. When he was urged to prosecute Beryl, he wrote, "She was drunk, didn't realize what she was doing. Let her go."

Our visitor didn't like it; I could see that. But there was nothing he could do. I saw him off down those hundred steps, then stood on the patio, smoked a cigarette, and considered the situation. I had a room in a little old hotel down by the harbour; it would be easy enough for me to shift my few things up to the cottage here and stay for a bit. I flipped my cigarette end over the parapet, went in to make the suggestion to Greg. He wouldn't hear of it. He wrote on his pad that he wasn't entirely helpless, he could hobble around; Antonio Rullán's wife could come in and do the odd jobs; and anyway, frankly, he'd rather be on his own.

There remained the matter of ice for his head. As there was no refrigerator in the cottage, every morning I got up at six, went to Diego's for a block of ice, and carried it, in a wet sack that dripped chill against my spine, up the dusty trail in the flicker of shine and shade under the olives, and up the hundred steps to the cottage.

After a day or two, Señora Rullán and I rigged up a bit of an awning for Greg on the patio. When I arrived in the mornings, I'd make some coffee and, sitting on the flagstones alongside him, regale him with the overnight gossip from Diego's.

One morning I had a real titbit. Powner had heard that Beryl was living in the yacht, anchored in Palma harbour, of some cruising millionaire.

Greg sat for some time pressing the ice-bag absently to his forehead and gazing out at the empty dazzle of sea and sky. I wondered what his thoughts were. He put aside the ice-bag, took up his pencil, wrote for a while, handed me the pad.

I read, "I don't know what I should have done without you. I feel I owe you some kind of explanation. I deserve what I got from Beryl, for ever marrying her. It was a crazy thing to do. Three years ago I was engaged to a girl called Beth. This dog belonged to her. Beth was in that air crash with me. She was killed. I wish it had been me."

I glanced up at him. He was staring out to sea, pulling gently at the dog's ear. It was utterly quiet. The heatwaves shimmered.

I read on: "When my voice returned and I left hospital, I was warned—no excitement, complete quiet. I tried it, but the thought of Beth gave me no peace. I broke my régime, lived pretty wild for a time, had another warning—to get away to some such place as this. Couldn't face it alone. Had to have a companion. I knew Beryl. The idea of a marriage of mutual convenience, without pretence on either side, seemed feasible to me—an advantage to us both. Mad, of course."

Of course, I thought bleakly.

"I got what I deserved," I read on, "for being such a fool. Beryl hated the dog. She was nagging me about it that night at the *fiesta*. She threatened to poison it. I told her we were doing each other no good, she'd better take half of what money I had and go. That's when she swiped me. I didn't see it coming. The first blow did the damage; I knew my voice had gone again. She meant to do it, but her going's almost worth the price. Anyway, I made a discovery a few hours ago. *I can still talk.*"

That puzzled me. I looked up at him. His grey eyes were watching me. He nodded, with a queer smile, and I sensed excitement in him. He took the pad, wrote rapidly for a while, handed it back.

I read, "When all this happened, I was working on a play. I'd left a scene unfinished on the tape-recorder. Thought about it last night. Found the cable from the living-room plug was long enough for me to have the recorder on the bedside table. Sat in bed playing the scene over, hoping I could pick up the threads and get going with plain longhand, but the doctor's pills got me dopey. Switched off, fell asleep. Some instinct woke me after a while. The recorder was running. Found I hadn't switched off, but had switched the mike to 'live.' Wondered how sensitive it was, played the tape back to see if it had picked up the sound of crickets all round here at night. It had. It also had picked up the voice of a man—talking in his sleep. It made my scalp creep. The man was me."

I couldn't believe it. I stared up at him. "Yet, awake," I said, "you're——"

He nodded. I felt his tension, his excitement. I rose to my feet. "Greg, Dr. Valdes must know about this."

He seized the pad from me. He wrote emphatically, "No! No one. Not yet. It may not happen again."

I argued. I pointed out that the neurological oddity might have clinical significance for the doctor. He shook his head. He looked at me with hostility. I knew he regretted having confided in me.

I said, "Well—it's your affair, of course."

But I was troubled. I didn't know what was going on in his head. Morning after morning, when I had toiled up the trail and up those interminable steps, lugging the dripping ice-sack, I felt behind his silence a secret, consuming excitement.

In my little hotel room down by the harbour, from the table in the window where I did a bit of studying in the afternoons, I could look across the glass-still water, mirroring moored boats, to the white dot of Greg's cottage just visible on its spur high up the silvery mountainside.

I kept looking up at it. I couldn't concentrate on my work. I'd go out to sit under Diego's patched awning and listen to Powner pontificating, cigar-stub in mouth, beer mug in hand, nose peeling under his frayed panama.

I found Dr. Valdes there with him one afternoon.

"Visited your friend this noon," the doctor greeted me. "Much more strength in his left arm and left leg. He's using too many of those sleeping pills, though. I told him to ease off. Otherwise, I'm pleased. I feel there's good hope for a return of his voice, eventually."

"Heard the latest about Beryl?" Powner said. "We reap as we sow. She thought she had her millionaire wound round her finger, yachts and minks and all the trimmings. But the story of what she did to Greg—it got round to her rich playboy, at last. It was a red light to him. Yesterday afternoon he upped anchor and sailed while she was ashore shopping. Serve the vindictive wildcat right." Powner peeled a bit of skin from his nose. "We reap as we sow."

I was uneasy. A small island, Majorca. No part of it was more than an hour or two distant

Continued on page 30

Life's a crazy party for Harry Secombe

by JOHN ENNIS

Whatever he did exploded into scatterbrained farce—so he tried it on the stage. Now the shy eccentric with the four-octave voice can earn £500 a week

ONE MONDAY EVENING in 1947 a bouncing, thick-set young comedian rushed on the stage of a northern theatre carrying a pot of lather and a shaving brush, and began a wild mime of different ways of shaving. He lathered his face, the top of his head, his chest and his arms. The audience was silent. He fell on his back and imitated a gorilla. The audience became restive. He sang a "duet" in a voice that switched from tenor to high falsetto. Wet with sweat and sticky with shaving soap, he left the stage to a slow handclap and boos.

In the wings, the stage manager was waiting angrily, and told him he would not be needed for the rest of the week, adding sarcastically, "You can shave in your own time, not mine."

Only a few months earlier the comedian, Harry Secombe, had made a hit in the West End of London, with a near-insane form of humour that he and a group of friends had developed in army shows. "Breaking into the theatre had seemed too easy," says Secombe, who had been an office boy before he joined the army in 1939. "I began to realize that it was a tougher life than I had thought."

His first setback had come when, after eight appearances as resident comedian in the radio show *Variety Bandbox*, his contract was not renewed. With another comedian, Michael Bentine, he had sat through the night in a café writing scripts for *Variety Bandbox* that made them almost hysterical with laughter.

His Voice Cuts Like A Knife

"I helped to write him off the air," Bentine admits now. According to Secombe, the scripts were written on old envelopes. "They never seemed so funny when they were typed. I used to cover up my embarrassment on the air with a nervous, high-pitched laugh. My voice cuts like a knife, and the laugh irritated me, so it must have irritated the listeners."

Today, at thirty-two, Secombe is among the twenty highest paid comedians in Britain, taking leading comedy parts in two top radio programmes, *Educating Archie* and *The Goon Show*. In a good week his pay, from radio and variety, has reached £500.

After his disastrous experiences in 1947, Secombe decided to learn his job from nearer the bottom. He went into a touring revue. "It knocked some of the rough edges off me," he says—but he still made mistakes. Playing the Dame in a pantomime, he walked on wearing a

Mad situations arise whenever the goons get together. Secombe (left) clowns with Sellars and bearded Milligan at a B.B.C. rehearsal

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPH BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

moustache and smoking a cigar. "It didn't go down well with the children. They shouted, 'It's a man dressed up.' I drew more hisses at the end than the Demon King."

The turning point in his career came when he noticed that letters from people who had seen or heard him all put forward the same idea—"stop fooling about and sing straight songs." Willing to try anything, Secombe ended his act with a serious song. Later he took singing lessons from an Italian trainer of opera singers, Manlio Di Veroli, who discovered that Secombe had a voice with a remarkable range covering four octaves.

"My career has gone in leaps and bounds since then," says Secombe. "I found that people can put up with craziness only in small doses, blended with a certain amount of pathos. They can't identify themselves comfortably with a madman." In spite of this discovery his sense of the ridiculous often compels him to fall flat on his back while singing the top note of an operatic aria.

During their lean days, Secombe and Bentine joined with Spike Milligan to work out ideas for what later became *The Goon Show*. At that time Bentine had a small flat in Notting Hill Gate, London. Unknown to the landlady, the other two would often save money by sleeping on the floor and sharing Bentine's breakfast. "They used to shout a loud 'good night,' slam the door, then creep back inside," says Bentine. Today, although Bentine has left the team, the other goons still look upon him as one of themselves.

Unlike many comedians, Secombe is addicted to off-stage humour. Almost any conversation can send him into an impromptu mime, and often he puts himself to endless trouble to make his friends laugh. One Saturday night he was packing to leave a theatre dressing-room while friends were waiting. "He packed not only his own things, but everything movable in the dressing-room," Bentine recalls. "Even the electric light bulbs went in, and he walked out with bulging cases. When the laughter had ended he had to put everything back."

Whenever they are together, Secombe, Bentine, Spike Milligan and the fourth goon, Peter Sellers, automatically create mad situations. Once, in a restaurant, Secombe buttoned his duffel coat above his head and from inside the coat began speaking a loud, Chinese-sounding gibberish. The others told the proprietor that Secombe was drunk, crept out of the restaurant, and left him to pay.

Happy Impersonator

His ability to imitate almost any accent or sound delights producers. Roy Speer, producer of *Educating Archie*, says: "I never send him a script in advance. He comes into the studio, singing and gay, and makes our work a pleasure. He can pick up the script and be acting when he reads it through for the first time. Now and then we use animal noises—donkeys, mules, cows, chickens. People go to great trouble to make special effects records. Then, at the tea break in rehearsals, we often hear Harry amusing everybody by making much more lifelike noises than the real animals. So we scrap the records, and he does the effects."

Secombe's bouncing, life-of-the-party ways conceal an underlying shyness that acquaintances rarely suspect. One friend who has noticed this says: "His boisterous manner is often a cover for acute embarrassment."

When he was younger, the uncertainty that caused his shyness led Secombe to accept any kind of "dare." As a schoolboy he was dared to ride a bicycle along the edge of Swansea Dock. He rode into the water. "I made my usual mistake of keeping one eye on the gallery to see what impression I was creating," he says.

Later, in the army, he made many attempts to become the hero of the hour. Always he was frustrated. On one scheme an urgent order had to be passed to a gun site three miles away over rough country, and the telephone had broken down. Secombe volunteered to run with the message. His sister, Mrs. Carol Williams, who enjoys telling this story, says: "He staggered into the gun site, handed over a piece of paper, and stood with bowed head, waiting for words of praise. By mistake he had run all that way with the programme of a concert he was organizing. While he was trying to explain, another runner arrived with the real message. It had been found soon after Harry left."

Today, Secombe lives in a modern ten-room house in Sutton, Surrey, with his wife and two children, Jennifer, five, and one-year-old Andrew. His wife Myra comes from Swansea, where Secombe was born. His father, a commercial traveller, met his mother when they were both taking part in an amateur concert. Their elder son is now a vicar in Monmouthshire.

Havoc In The Office

Secombe left Dynevor Secondary School, Swansea, at sixteen to become an office boy in the coal department of a steel company, where he gained a reputation for causing havoc by imitating the bosses on the telephone.

Bill Layman, his immediate superior in the coal office, says, "He was a goon from very early in life. I only once saw him in a quiet mood. It was the day his mother underwent a serious operation. It was like being in a room where the clock had stopped."

At seventeen, Secombe joined the Territorial Army. "He lied about his age, and borrowed a friend's stronger spectacles to pass the test." says Layman. Two months later the war began, and Secombe was called up. "I became regimental clown," he says.

As a lance-bombardier he was in the invasion of North Africa in 1942, and later he fought in Italy. When the war ended he was taken into the Central Pool of Artists. Philip Slessor, the B.B.C. announcer, was his commanding officer in the C.P.A., with the rank of colonel.

Some time ago, Secombe was taking part in a broadcast in which Slessor was making the announcements. Before going on the air, Secombe said to Slessor, "I don't suppose you remember, but I served under you in the Central Pool of Artists." Slessor was delighted, and decided to alter his script. He announced Secombe as "my old wartime comrade. . . ."

After the broadcast, Secombe told Slessor of the only occasion on which they had met while in the army. "I was running down some steps, wearing a silk scarf with my battledress," he explained. "You stopped me, tore me off a strip, and sent me back to put on a collar and tie." THE END

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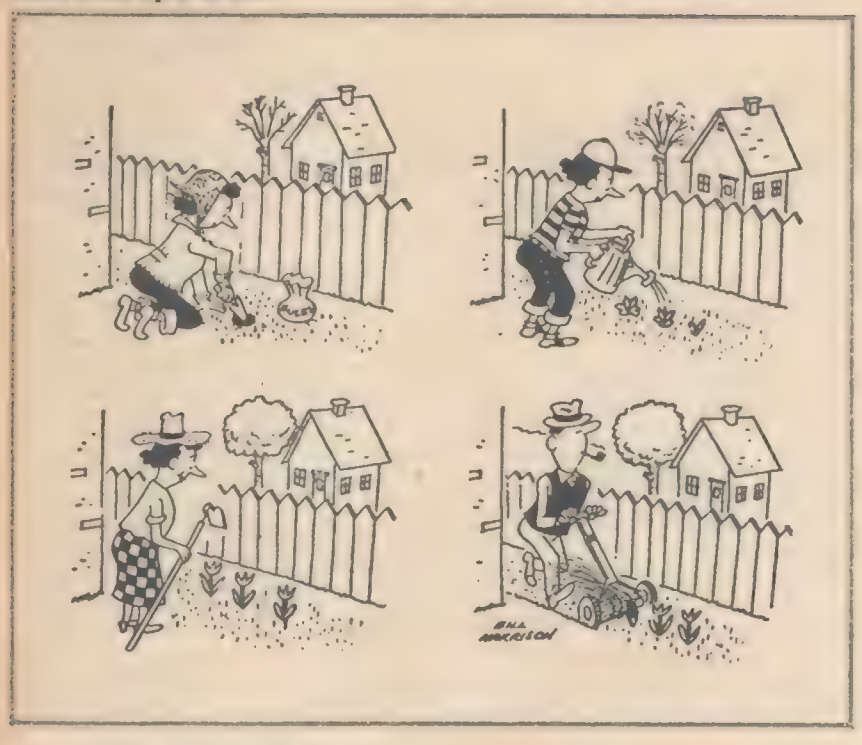

REACH FOR THE SKY

Continued from page 15

telling you that you'd be all right, but all you did was be ruddy rude. There's only one thing you've still got to learn and that's to change your socks now and then. It's getting a bit noticeable already."

"Why should I?" Bader grinned. "I haven't even taken my shoes off for two weeks." (As another man pulls on his shoes and laces them up, Bader pulls on his legs—which have his shoes and socks attached—and buckles and laces them up.)

"Please yourself," said Streatfeild; "but I can just imagine people some day muttering to each other, 'Don't go too near Bader, he's still wearing those same purple socks he had on at Uxbridge twenty years ago.'"

Socks Had Worn Away

Changing into his best clothes that morning while waiting for the car, Bader did take his shoes off and was amazed to see that his socks had practically no feet on them. Not only the heels and toes were worn away but almost the whole of each foot as well. He realized that it must be because there was friction now on each side of the sock where before there had been soft, yielding skin on one side. Changing his socks, he hobbled out and got a thrill as he saw the familiar old M.G. swing through the gate.

Bader had already worked out a way to drive his car again during the weeks that he lay in bed in hospital. His short right stump, he had figured, would probably not be sensitive or quick enough to guide a leg working both accelerator and brake. But his left leg would. All right—he'd have the outside pedals transposed: work the clutch on the right with his right leg and use the left for both foot-brake and accelerator. The seat would slide back on runners so that he could climb in easily and then lock it in the driving position. He had already given the garage instructions to make the necessary adjustments to the car.

As the car pulled up the mechanic said: "I had a terrible time driving it over. Kept putting my foot on the brake to change gear and then treading on the clutch to stop."

"You seem to have made it all right."

"Yes sir," the mechanic said. "In the end I crossed my legs and drove that way."

Bader heaved himself into the seat behind the wheel. His feet seemed to fit the pedals easily enough. He pressed the clutch down with the right leg—it was purely a thigh movement with no feeling in the leg or foot at all, but he *could* feel the pressure of the clutch against his thigh with enough sensitivity to control it and let it up slowly.

He tried the left foot on brake and accelerator and found there was enough feeling in the shin to switch the foot from one to the other. That was strictly a knee movement, but the whole thing seemed to be easier than he had expected.

He started up and drove slowly round the asphalt parade ground: no trouble in keeping an even pressure on the accelerator and no tendency to do the wrong thing. For a quarter of an hour he drove in figure eights, stopping, starting and reversing, and was highly gratified. It was almost literally driving a car by the seat of his pants—and rather a good augury for the time he started flying again.

With his old confidence he said to Streatfeild: "Like falling off a log. Now we're off."

"God be with you," Streatfeild said. "I suppose they'll bring you back without a head this time."

He steered out of the gates and drove in a sunny mood and at a cautious speed to Kingston Police Station, where he lurched with care up to a uniformed man behind a desk and said: "I'd like to take a disabled driver's test, please."

"Certainly, sir," said the constable.

"It's just that I've got no legs, but I can handle the car perfectly well."

He might have been remarking that it was a nice day for all the reaction he got; one would have thought that legless men popped in for driving tests every day. Soon a man in civilian clothes came out and got into the car with him. Bader drove away from the kerb explaining the transposed pedals, but the man did not seem interested. After a couple of hundred yards he said: "Stop and reverse across the road, will you, please?"

Bader stopped, looked behind to see if everything was clear, and reversed. "Glad to see you look behind first," the man said. "Last chap didn't do that. If you'd like to drive me back to the station you can fill out the form and we'll give you your ticket."

It was as easy as that.

She Stared At Him

Blithely he set off for the Pantiles, thinking as he drove along of the girl there. He realized that his friendship with the girl was becoming more important to him each time they met. But though he now had his new legs, he was still unsure of himself and of his future relationship with life. Could he think of a girl in a serious way yet?

At about four o'clock he pulled up in front of the café. Out of the corner of one eye he saw the girl over by the serving hatch staring at him, for the last time he had been there he had walked on crutches and a peg-leg. He kept looking straight ahead, concentrating on appearing casual about his metamorphosis.

She came across to the table looking

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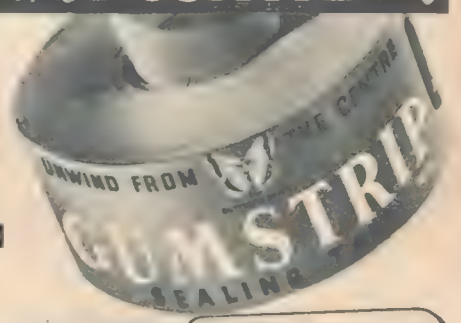

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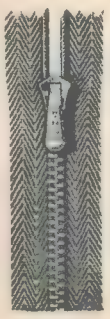

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very bright and he switched on the glowing grin. With a little less reserve than usual she remarked that he had not been there for some time and he was delighted that she was too discreet to mention the legs, though he had been quite sure that she wouldn't. But it made everything so natural, as though there were nothing at all remarkable about his walking.

He chatted before he ordered and chatted again when she brought the tea, and again when she brought his bill. He paid her, got up, stumped over to the car, praying that he would not fall, turned round—she was still watching—and gave her an enormous wink. As he drove away he wondered again what her name was.

Now with the car and able to walk, even if still precariously, life took on a new savour and he drove out every day to sample it. Most days he had tea at the Pantiles and the friendship with the girl progressed quietly and decorously with no particular move on either side. He still had to find out where he stood in regard to life.

There was also his friend Patricia, who was away on a sea trip with her mother, and wrote from the ship in Madeira. It was just a brief note to say she was due back soon and hoping he was getting along well. That was something more to sort out.

Kendall, the warden of his old school, St. Edward's, had been writing to him constantly and encouragingly ever since the accident, and Bader wrote to let him know how successful the new legs were. Back came a suggestion from the warden: why not play in the Old Boys' cricket match in a few weeks? Just that little touch gave Bader a thrill and he wrote back a joyful acceptance.

Frightened The Maid

Several times in this period he went to his friends Audrey and Adrian Stoop, at Hartley Wintney and once he stayed the night, scaring the life out of a maid in the morning by bouncing down the stairs on his rump and hands because for some small unremembered errand he could not be bothered to put his legs on.

They were still uncomfortable, especially the wretched shoulder straps that seemed to tie him up so that he felt hobbled. Yet all the time he was becoming more sure of them, though he still fell from time to time.

Audrey Stoop said one day: "Honestly, Douglas, no one would know that you haven't got your own legs."

"Oh, don't be silly," he said. "Anyone would know." But, absurdly pleased, he got down on his knees and turned a somersault on the lawn. "I've been dying to do that," he beamed.

From time to time the Stoops introduced him to other visitors who were never told, at least till later, that he had no legs, and they were therefore quite natural with him, regarding him only as a young man with a bad limp. Natural reactions like that were good for him; he was already aware of a subtle, constrained atmosphere with some strangers who already knew.

Asked Girl To Dance

The Stoops took him one night to a nearby party where someone started playing a gramophone and couples began dancing. Bader, aflame with a new challenge, had to try. He asked a girl to dance; she smiled and got up, and as they started he caught his toe and fell, luckily not dragging her down with him.

As he got clumsily to his feet she said tartly: "You're drunk," and left him. Later she was horrified when she found out, but she need not have worried because the incident did not trouble Bader, who was too practical to have any pity for himself.

In the middle of June Bader suggested some sick-leave, and O'Connell, the young doctor who was looking after him, said it was a good idea. He'd better take a couple of months and get really used to life outside again. Rather than go all the way home to Yorkshire straight away, Bader said he would go to his old squadron at Kenley for a couple of weeks so that if anything more went wrong with the legs he would be within easy reach of Roehampton.

"That's a silly question. Of course my wife is at home"

With nostalgic eagerness for the familiar faces and atmosphere he drove to Kenley and walked into a deserted mess, full only of empty memory. A waiter he did not recognize said that most of the pilots were away on an air-firing course at Sutton Bridge.

Then Harry Day, his former squadron commander, who was waiting for a posting overseas, walked in and saved the moment. "Hey, hey," Day said cheerfully. "What've we got here? Good lord, you look like a drunken sailor." Then the mess sergeant came along beaming with pleasure and said he could have his old room back.

He felt a queer moment of pleasure when he looked again at the spartan bed, the lino, rug, chair and the bookshelves. It was even his old batman who answered the bell, and said warmly: "Why Mr. Bader, sir, it's good to see you back."

Bader shook his hand. "It's good to *be* back," he said. "I'm staying for a while. Have you still got my kit here?"

"Yes, sir," said the batman. "All safely in store. I'll go and bring it."

Their Eyes Met . . .

Soon he was back with the trunks and Bader rested in the chair while the batman began hanging up the clothes and stowing shirts and things in drawers. There was an awkward moment when, delving into a trunk, he pulled out a pair of rugger boots; their eyes met for a moment and the batman put the boots back in the trunk. A little later Bader said: "Bring up my cricket-bag, will you?"

Next afternoon was very hot and Day suggested he join his family for a swim—Day had a lovely home with a handsome blue-tiled swimming-pool near Kenley. That raised a new problem. He also had three children.

Bader asked awkwardly: "Will the youngsters mind if they—er—see me?"

"Good lord, no," Day said. "They'll probably be fascinated."

While the others changed in the house, Bader walked the hundred yards across the lawns to the pool, took his legs off and changed under a tree, then rump-walked to the edge of the pool and lay on the grass waiting. When the children came down—girls of eight and three and a boy of six—he was feeling uncomfortably self-conscious, but the youngsters, apparently well briefed, did not seem to notice anything unusual.

"Slip in over the side," Day said, "and I'll stand by in case you're top-heavy and turn upside down."

"Hell, no." he said. "I'm going in off the springboard."

At the deep end the springboard jutted over the water from a platform on stilts about eight feet high. He rump-walked to it and hauled himself up the short ladder with his hands, holding his weight between hauls with the right stump on the rungs. Then he swung to the end of the springboard, stood on his hands and dived in.

Spouting water and grinning, he surfaced (right way up) finding himself more buoyant in the water without his legs, though swimming seemed more tiring because he could not kick to help himself along and, instead of being top-heavy, his rump tended to sag in the water instead of trailing in the normal flat position. But they were details; just being in the water felt glorious.

Having tea on the grass afterwards, the children's curiosity overcame their briefing and they stared frankly and with great interest at the stumps, but so innocently and naturally that he was not in the least embarrassed. All afternoon they swam or lay in the hot sun, which was good to feel on his bare, pallid skin after the months indoors.

Trapped By The Sun

Round about seven the family went back to change and Douglas dressed on the lawn. As soon as he started walking back to the house he felt the shoulder straps chafing his shoulders and realized with annoyance that he was sunburned. By the time he reached the house they were beginning to hurt. He was up against a new problem.

When he awoke next morning in the mess, his shoulders were red and tender. He strapped the legs on, but as soon as he stood up the straps bit into his shoulders like hot bread-knives scraping on the nerves. He sat down hurriedly, wincing, and slipped them off with relief, swearing with frustration. From a little thing like that he was helpless again, unable even to get to the dining-room for breakfast unless he submitted to the unthinkable indignity of the rump-walk in public. More than ever he loathed the shoulder straps.

In desperation he unbuckled them from the stomach-belt, hoping he might be able to struggle out cautiously without them. After pulling the belt fairly tight, he eased himself up from the bed and gingerly took a few steps. To his amazement and delight the legs felt better than ever before and just as secure.

For several minutes he stumped about the room, an odd sight in creaking legs, vest and underpants, and everything he did felt better. After that he tossed the shoulder straps into a corner, dressed and stumped out to breakfast. (He never wore the shoulder straps again.)

Patricia was due back and he rang her home. The butler said yes, she had returned and went to find her, but came back soon to say she was not in.

"Ask her to ring me, would you?" Bader said.

No call came in the next three days, but on the fourth morning a letter arrived from her. It was only about four lines and the line that mattered was: "I don't think it's any good us going on any longer. . . ."

The Letter Hurt Him

It was, he felt, the first time that he did not belong, was not exactly a wallflower or a leper, but a man apart. In an unguarded moment it brought him facing a stark and ugly possibility that he had refused to admit into his controlled thoughts, though it had always haunted the background. The girl herself did not mean a great deal to him, but bitterly he felt that she might at least have made some other excuse than hinting so baldly that the trouble was that he had lost his legs.

That letter rubbing it in loosened some of the roots of his robust but none-too-firmly planted confidence. Outwardly he was as breezy as ever, but in private he had hours of encroaching doubt which, in the end, only made him more stubbornly set on making no major concessions to life.

Several times he went to the Pantiles, and the fact that the girl was so clearly glad to see him, accepting him as he was, strengthened his morale.

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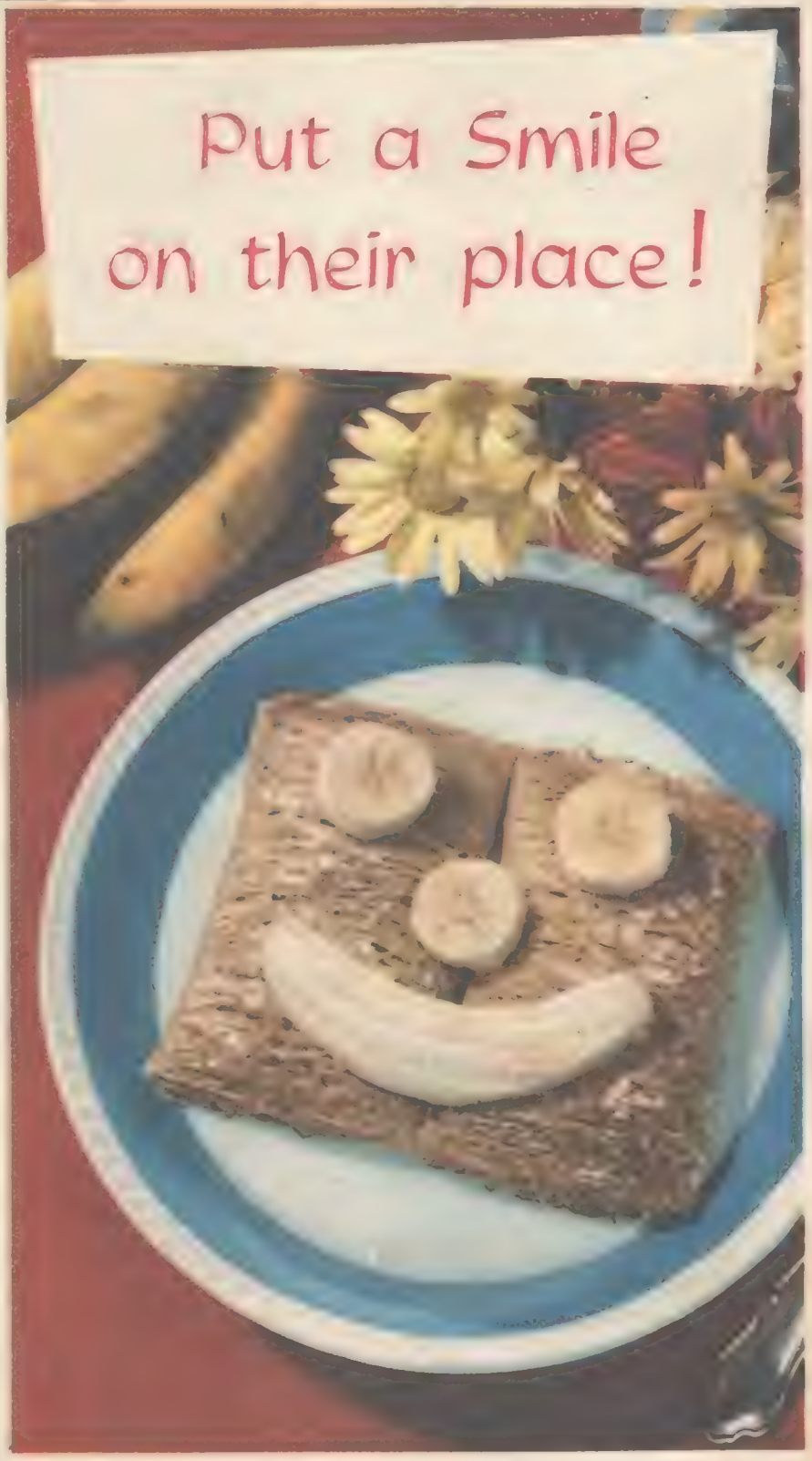

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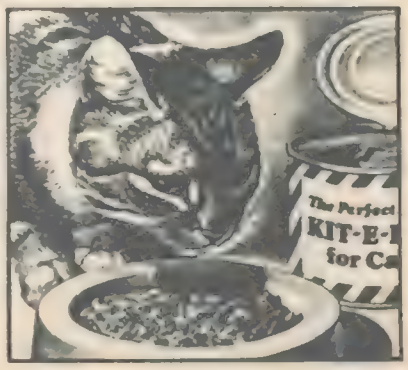

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"Daddy, look what I've got!"

THE HELLCAT

Continued from page 24

from any other part. . . . I was uneasy but I did nothing about it, did not seek to warn Greg. I blame myself.

Diego's first words, when I went for the ice at six next morning, were, "She's back. Don Gregorio's señora. Walked down the street here about midnight last night, just off the train from Palma. Muttering to herself." He winked. "Drunk."

I felt a chill at my spine. I grabbed the wet sack and did the walk up that dusty, familiar trail faster than I ever had done it. Not until I was nearing the top of the hundred steps did I slow down, then stop to listen. The air was burning hot, pungently scented. There was no sound but the sultry drum of my own heart, the *drip-drip-drip* from the ice-sack over my shoulder.

I went up, slowly, treading silently in my rope-soled shoes. The cottage's massive, studded door was wide open, as always. I stepped in. After the dazzle outside, I could see nothing till my eyes adjusted. Slivers of sunlight showed, then, through the strands of the bead curtain in the arch up the six steps in the corner to the left. I went to the steps, but I didn't mount them.

I stood looking at the crimson dots on the whitewash of them. Bloodspots.

The cottage was hot, still, utterly silent.

I stepped clear of the bloodspots, and the cable snaking up the steps, and parted the strands of the curtain. Greg lay in the bed, with the sun shining in on the white sheet that covered him. There were blood splotches vivid on the sheet.

"Greg!" I said. My voice caught in a parched throat. I stood there, peering in. "Greg!"

His head turned on the pillows. His eyes opened slowly; he looked at me in a dazed, unfocused way.

"Greg," I said. "This blood everywhere——"

He hitched himself higher on the pillows, stared at the blotches dried on the sheet. I seized his pad and pencil, lying on the recorder on the bedside table, and thrust them into his hands. He gave me that dazed look, then wrote laboriously, "Beryl was here."

"I know that," I said.

He wrote, "I killed her."

I couldn't believe it. But there was the blood, the blood on the sheet, the trail of spots across the flagstoned floor.

He looked at the blood, and he nodded slowly, and wrote, "I didn't know whether it was real or whether I'd dreamed it. I was full of that sleep dope. The light was off. I woke, felt her bending over me, knew she'd come to hurt me. I got her by the throat. We stumbled through the curtain, down the steps there. I held on. I could feel her weakening. I dragged her on to the patio, threw her over the parapet. I can still hear her scream as she fell. I must have keeled over on the steps when I hobbled back in, because that's where I was when I came to. I dragged myself to the bed. I'd fallen asleep with the recorder running. I remember switching it off, then I fell on the bed and went out like a light."

"But the blood?" I said.

After a moment, he held back the sheet. He wore nothing but a pair of shorts, and there was a gash, dark with dried blood, in his thigh.

He wrote, "Must have got it from the wrought-iron banister when we struggled on the steps. I killed her, all right. She's out there."

I went out on to the tiny patio, crossed to the foot-high parapet with its cactus-clumps and scarlet geraniums, looked over the edge.

SHE was there. In that striped frock, she lay on the dusty trail a hundred feet below, glaring up with sightless eyes at the glare of the sun. Near her was parked a dusty car, and two men stood looking down at her—Antonio Rullán and the Civil Guard.

I stepped back quickly, before they should look up and see me. Moisture trickled down inside my clothes. What would they call this? Murder? Manslaughter? Ideas darted about my mind like rats in a trap.

I turned to the cottage, but there came over me that feeling I had had once before—that watched feeling. I glanced towards the foliage that arched the head of the steps. Someone was there. I knew who it was, even before the speckled shadows moved, and he stepped out, in his white suit, his sleek head gleaming black like enamel in the sun.

He didn't say a word, only watched me with his pale eyes as he fitted a cigarette into his stubby holder. Setting the holder between his teeth, he walked into the cottage. I followed. He stopped at the foot of the six

curved steps. He stood looking at the bloodspots on the whitewash, then went on up the steps, parted the curtain, stepped into the narrow bedroom. Greg, propping himself against the wall with his shoulder, was tying the cord of his bathrobe. He looked at the man in white, then at me standing behind the man.

I nodded slowly, answering the question in Greg's eyes. He reached for his pad and pencil.

I moved forward quickly. "Don't write anything," I warned him, "till we've been in touch with the consul."

But he wrote, "What's the good?" Then he wrote, "There's a quicker way of confession than writing it out."

I knew what he meant. The tape-recorder had been running when all that had happened last night.

"Greg, don't be a fool," I said. "Don't do it!"

It was done. He had reached out and set the tape running, and into the narrow, hot, sunbright room came a sound of the Mallorquin night, the brittle *chir-chir-chir* of crickets. I heard, from the recorder, a sigh and a creak of bedsprings, heard the breathing of the restless man grow gradually deeper, against the background sound of the seething crickets. The hair stirred suddenly on my head as a voice murmured through the room.

I never had heard Greg's voice before, waking or sleeping. The voice was thick, slurred, shaping unintelligible words, yet growing clearer.

"Saw it in your eyes," the voice murmured. "Dumb. Strike him dumb. Remember?"

Only the crickets answered. The voice mumbled, dying away, and I heard the low, deep growling of a dog. It grew steadily louder. Suddenly there was a savage half-bark, half-snarl, and the cane beads of the curtain clattered as the dog sprang.

A thin cry sounded, "Greg! Call him off! Greg——"

There were faint, confused sounds that might have been the snapping, snarling lunges of the dog as the woman retreated, backwards—kicking, perhaps, at the dog in the darkness—on to the tiny patio. A half-drunk woman, harassed by a lunging dog, retreating backwards towards a foot-high parapet, in treacherous starlight.

Faint, thin, high, sounded a long scream. There was a violent creaking of bedsprings.

I SAID, "That's enough! That's enough!" I reached out and stopped the slowly unreeling tape. "She was gone over that parapet before you were out of your bed, Greg. You tried to go to her help, and you fell down those steps, cutting your thigh and knocking yourself cold. But Beryl screamed her death scream, Greg, before ever you'd left your bed."

The dog, sitting at Greg's feet where he leaned against the wall, had its slant eyes fixed on the recorder and was growling quietly, as though in reminiscence, deep in its throat. Something of the strain had gone from Greg's face; his eyes looked different, younger somehow.

The man in white struck a match, lighted his cigarette, blew a long, thoughtful feather of smoke.

"I shall have to take this machine for a few days," he said. And he added dryly, "A lucky accident for you, that you fell asleep with it running."

Accident? I didn't say anything. I went out and saw him off, carrying the recorder, down those hundred steps of speckled shade. For a minute or two, I stayed there on the patio, looking out at the blind glare from sea and sky; then picked up the ice-sack and went in to Greg. . . .

That happened over two years ago. Greg is normal now, his voice having returned just about ten months later, long after he'd left that cottage. He's still apt to talk in his sleep. Sometimes he dreams of his air crash, and speaks of Beth. Never of Beryl. Mostly, though, it's of his present wife, Jenny, that he speaks. He doesn't know it, because he no longer uses a tape-recorder, but I know it. I'm Jenny. THE END

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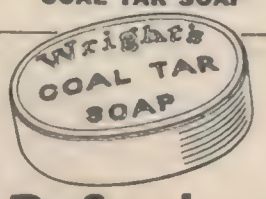

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BHOWANI JUNCTION

Continued from page 12

not! Sooner or later you'll have to sell out. But there's a boom on now, and now is the time to sell St. Thomas's."

All that made sense, I suppose, but what those Englishmen in Bombay didn't realize was that we couldn't sell St. Thomas's, because it was in our hearts. Without it we'd just be wogs like everybody else. They might just as well have said we couldn't afford trousers or topis, or told us to turn our skins black instead of khaki.

So I lost my temper with Victoria and shouted: "After the English have gone? They won't leave, man! How can they leave, with the Mohammedans and the Hindus cutting each other's throats every day?"

Rose Mary screamed at Victoria: "Of course they won't leave. They can't. You talk as if you want the Congress to become our government!"

Then I banged my fist on the table. I shouted: "My God, if they leave I will go Home with them!"

Victoria sat up with a jerk, very pale, and she screamed: "Home? Where is your home, man? England? Then you fell into the Black Sea on your way out? I don't want to see the Congress ruling here, but I am only asking you, what else is there that can happen? I am only asking you to think, man!" She pushed back her chair and ran out of the dining-room.

I sat there, feeling a little sick. Rose Mary said something to me, but I shook my head, and after a time I heard her leave the house. Mrs. Jones disappeared, God knows where.

I had to get up and go to Victoria. I went to her room and knocked very gently on the door. She did not answer. I knocked again and whispered: "Victoria—Victoria? I am sorry. Let me come in."

"Come in then," she said after a time.

I opened the door cautiously. She was lying on her back on the bed, her hands over her eyes. I stood shuffling my feet and looking at her.

She put her hands down and said: "Well?"

I tried to tell her what I had been thinking, about how we had no choice and how we must use our hearts, not our brains. She was calm by then. She put her hand on mine and said: "Do you think I am just trying to run away from you all? My dear, I would be running away from myself, wouldn't I?"

I couldn't speak. She kneaded my hand under hers and said: "It is my heart that makes me disagree with you, Patrick, as well as my head. There are other ways to live, and I've seen them. You don't realize how fresh and free it is to be English—or Indian. Why must we torture ourselves with ideas that we are better than some people and worse than others? Why don't we put on dhotis or saris if we want to, and marry Indians? I don't despise anyone now, and I don't fear anyone. I'm just me, but I'm not in a cage any more, like I think you are."

My God, she was beautiful then, with the wet shining in her big eyes and her hair all out over the pillow. She was like a doe in the forest that wants to love the leopard and admire the green grass and do no harm to anyone. But, I thought, she will learn that the leopard can't live unless it eats her, and she can't live unless she eats the green grass, and she can't really love anything except another deer.

Then I realized something very important. To her, now, nothing was inevitable. Being a cheechee wasn't inevitable. I wasn't inevitable. I had thought: We are in love, we are practically engaged, now we will get married, there's really nothing else either of us can do. But she didn't think like that now. I realized I would have to make her want to marry me.

The idea, coming suddenly, frightened me so much that the first thing I did was try to make love to her, just then and there.

She pushed me away and said quite gently: "No, dear."

I began to argue and plead, but just

then the telephone rang in the hall. We stared at each other for a few seconds, and then I went out to answer it.

It was the Collector on the phone, Govindaswami, the head man of the Bhowani civil district, the deputy commissioner and district magistrate and God knows what else besides, and the first Indian we'd ever had as deputy commissioner in Bhowani. It's an old custom to call the D.C. the Collector.

He wanted to see me about the derailment right away. I grumbled, but Govindaswami said I could bring Victoria along with me.

The Collector's bungalow in Bhowani is an old place, built before the Mutiny. It's on the east side of the Pike in about six acres of gardens.

On the veranda, a chuprassi in a scarlet achkan took our names and went inside. When he came back, Govindaswami was with him. Govindaswami held out his hand to Victoria and smiled at me.

"So nice of you to spare me some of your time, Mr. Taylor," he said in his la-di-da Oxford voice. "Won't you come in?"

I can't stand people who talk like that when they know perfectly well you've got to do what they ask you to. We followed him in. I'd never been in there before.

There were two men already in the room—Williams, of our railway police, and Lanson, the deputy superintendent of police—the ordinary civil police, that is. Williams was youngish, tallish, fattish. He was one of us, an Anglo-Indian. He was the fellow Sir Meredith Sullivan was going to stay with. Lanson was a typical, square Englishman. He had a moustache and spoke gruffly. He was the Collector's right-hand man.

Govindaswami had a bony forehead, the bones sticking out over his eyes, which were black. His cheeks seemed hollow because his cheekbones stuck out. He had thick lips and a thatch of grey hair. He was slightly built, and his hands were thin and his fingers long. He always wore rather narrow, white duck trousers and a white coat and a white shirt, all freshly starched and ironed, and a black bow-tie. Those white clothes dazzled you, and then as your eye went up—*bonk!* It was like being hit in the face when you saw that his skin was deep purple-black.

We four men began to talk while Victoria sat and listened. Williams said the derailment was sabotage, but he didn't know who'd done it, and the Collector began quietly asking about people. Was the stationmaster at Pathoda a Congress man? It was possible. What about my assistant, Ranjit Singh Kasel?

"Oh, I don't know," I said. "He might be. He is a cheeky beggar." I wanted to be fair to Kasel. In fact I was damned positive he was a Congress wallah.

Govindaswami said soapily: "I see, I see," and was silent for a bit.

"I have recently attended a governor's conference, as some of you know," he said. "The Government of India think trouble is brewing—industrial trouble, railway trouble, and perhaps worse. They think the situation will be much the same as in nineteen forty-two."

That was when Gandhi decided he could get the British to go, by his non-violence tactics. What that turned out to mean was derailing trains all over the country, and pouring petrol over village policemen and setting them on fire, and dragging people out of trains to beat them to death. My heart was going *bang-bang-bang*. I'd been through all that. I didn't want it again.

The Collector went on: "The Congress high command will recommend a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation, with the object of hurrying the British out of the country. The degree of non-violence will depend, as it did in 1942, on the nature of the local Congress men. The high command will merely say: 'Don't co-operate.' Mr. Surabhai, as the local Congress leader here, might then say: 'Don't give the Collector any petrol for his car.' But the man at the garage might say: 'Better still, why not pour the petrol over the Collector?'"

He went on: "Some Congress men genuinely believe a social revolution is the way to get rid of the British. But others want revolution for quite another reason—to make it impossible for the Congress itself to rule after the British go."

Victoria was so interested she interrupted. "Who do they think is going to rule then? What do they want?"

Govindaswami looked solemnly at her. "They want a complete revolution," he said. "Their masters, and their minds, are in Moscow. The thing they must prevent is an orderly hand-over to Congress. Everything must fail so that the people have only one hope, only one friend they can turn to. And these men will make sure they know who that 'friend' is."

There was a pause after that. The Collector said: "Sometimes Congress dare not act, for political reasons. For instance, K. P. Roy may be in hiding in this district."

K. P. Roy had been a Congress man. Now he was an out-and-out terrorist, but I could see why the Congress couldn't act openly against him. He was a sort of Frankenstein's monster to them. They'd created him, and made a lot of Indians think he was a hero; so now that he had run off the rails the Congress couldn't openly attack him.

Then Govindaswami asked all of us

to keep an eye on any Indians we knew and to tell him of any suspicions we had, however slight. "By the way," he said, "it's possible that the army is going to send a battalion of troops down here some time this month. I'll feel a little happier if they do."

When we left the Collector's bungalow, I took Victoria to the pictures.

All through the picture I was thinking of the derailment some of the time and of Victoria the rest of the time. When I thought about derailments and sabotage, I thought about K. P. Roy. Everyone knew his name. I thought of him pouring petrol over me in my office and setting light to me. I thought of him derailing Number 1 Down Mail when it was going at full speed down the Lidhganj bank.

My hands jerked up to cover my eyes before I knew what I was doing. Victoria looked at me in a funny way in the half-darkness and patted my arm. She understood because, I tell you, after all, she was a railway girl. And then I got thinking about her and me, and what had happened to her, and what would happen to us.

* * *

The noise on Number 1 platform while we were waiting for Sir Meredith Sullivan was perfectly terrible. It reminded me of the monkey house at the Calcutta Zoo.

I checked my watch two or three times against the station clock. I was nervous. I even shouted at the natives to keep quiet, although everyone knows that is quite hopeless.

I was nervous because of Victoria. She stood there with us, but somehow not looking as if she was with us. She watched us.

A noisy argument broke out because two women wanted their little girls to present bouquets to Sir Meredith, and I was ashamed because Victoria stood there with that queer look on her face, and we were making more noise than the wogs. We always do when we get excited. The English people never do. It put me in a bad temper with myself, deep down.

An engine whistled and the train came in sight. As it drew level, Victoria waved her hand and shouted, "Pater!" Her father was driving. She left us and squeezed breathlessly away along the platform. It was years since she had seen him on an engine.

Mr. Jones looked pale and a bit grey and lined and bent in the shoulders, and his eyes were ringed and tired; he had brought 98 Up Express from Muttra and would take it on to Gondwara.

I had to watch out for Sir Meredith Sullivan. I had never seen him in the flesh, and now I did and I was very shocked. He was a very sick man, his face heavy, and the skin on it all slack and greeny white. He moved and smiled and shook hands as if he had already been dead some time.

As I was guiding Sir Meredith towards the exit, the stationmaster pushed up to us and whispered in my ear. He said that two English officers on the train wanted to see me. I told him: "Not now, man! Later!"

The stationmaster said: "But they say it is urgent, Mr. Taylor. They have a telegram." I had to ask Sir Meredith Sullivan to excuse me, and stood there with the perspiration wet on my forehead until the party had left the platform. Then I noticed Victoria. She would be thinking I was just a stooge at the beck and call of every footling little officer. So I shouted: "Ah! Now let's see these bloody people. I'll teach them to waste my time. You watch me!"

I led the way as fast as I could go towards the back of the train.

The stationmaster said: "Here, Mr. Taylor."

There were a couple of dusty green valises side by side on the platform, and half a dozen suitcases and three or four gun cases and a fishing-rod case. An old bearer in white drill livery was waiting on the top step of a first-class compartment. When I came up he turned his head and said in Hindustani to someone inside: "The railway person has come, sahib."

The railway person! When I heard

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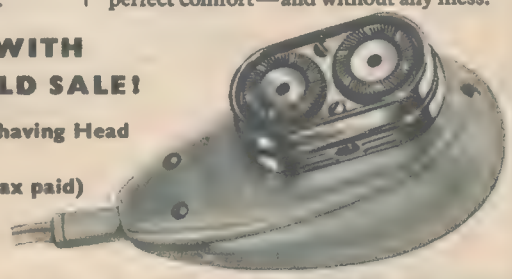

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"Here's an unusual one—an action shot of Charlie"

that, and Victoria there with me, it was the last straw.

The bearer stood aside. A pansy-looking, rather fat young lieutenant came out. He wore dark glasses and he had a big fair moustache. He said in a very hoity-toity voice to me: "I say, are you in charge here? Didn't you get the colonel's telegram? There don't seem to be any arrangements, do there?"

He had full, curved, red lips. I noticed them most particularly. He was hot and tired, and he was acting superior because I'm an Anglo-Indian.

Well, I was hot and tired, and I'd had enough. I waved my finger at him and shouted: "Why should there be any arrangements, mister? Did you want the whole staff of the Bhowani district to be lined up here on parade? You people in the military department think that the whole work of the railway department must stop for your benefit, but I tell you the war is over, and I tell you it is high time you knew that!"

The lieutenant blinked as though I'd hit him. He went red and said: "Here, who do you think you're talking to?" but he wasn't sure of himself. I can always tell, because I'm never sure of myself. When I saw that I really felt on top.

I pushed in closer to him and shouted louder. "I do not care who you are, mister. I tell you I do not know anything about a telegram. You did not send any telegram here!"

Then he said: "Take your paws off me, you damned cheechee!" I took a pace back and began to swing at him. I would have lost my job, but a job's not everything. I'm six feet two inches, and I weigh fourteen and a half stone. I would have wiped the floor with him.

But someone by my ear said: "That's enough." I stopped where I was. The voice was like an electric shock. I turned round. That was the first time I met Lieutenant-Colonel Rodney Savage.

He wasn't wearing a hat or dark glasses. His eyes were pale blue, bloodshot, and rimmed with dust, and there were crow's foot wrinkles at the corners, and his forehead was lined. He was thin, about five feet ten inches tall, and clean shaven. His face was quite long and became narrow below. He wore a single row of medal ribbons on his jungle-green bush jacket. I thought he was ill, of malaria perhaps.

He said to me: "My name is Savage. I command the First Battalion of the Thirteenth Gurkha Rifles. Have you had a telegram from General Headquarters, Delhi, or from the Railway Board, or from anyone else, warning you that my battalion is on its way here?"

It was like a cold hose being turned on me. I forgot the lieutenant and the crowd, even Victoria. My mouth opened and shut, and I said: "Telegram from General Headquarters? Battalion? Here?"

Colonel Savage stared at me. His mouth tightened, and his eyes began to glitter. He said: "I see you haven't. Nor have you had my telegram from Delhi telling you I was arriving on this train with my adjutant, Mr. Macaulay, here."

I stammered: "Adjutant? Oh my God, has that man Kasel forgotten to tell me this?" I took off my topi and wiped my forehead.

The colonel said: "I want to talk to you in your office."

"But, Colonel——"

"Don't say 'but' to me. Five hundred Gurkha riflemen of my regiment are in the train now—in two trains. It is no joke to be in a troop train in this heat. If the arrangements for their reception are not completed in good time I'll see that you, at least, suffer for it," he said.

"But, sir——"

Victoria saw what a jam I was in. She said with a little laugh: "I worked in Transportation Directorate at General Headquarters, Patrick, and I'm afraid it's possible enough. The man who sends those telegrams from Transportation is awfully nice, but he often forgets to send copies to everyone concerned. We've had trouble about that before."

The colonel's blue eyes came slowly round to her. He looked her up and down. His nostrils were pinched and his lips quite white.

"You worked in Transportation Directorate?" he said. "As a WAC (I)? Recently?" He said it in the army way —"Wack-eye."

"Yes," she said.

"Were you an officer or an auxiliary?"

"I was a subaltern. I'm on leave pending release," she said.

He said: "You'd better come along to the office with us."

Kasel stood up behind the desk when he saw us coming in. I said: "Kasel, there are two military troop specials on the way here. Find out where they are."

Kasel smiled shyly at Victoria before turning to answer me. He said: "I know, Mr. Taylor. One is at——"

It was too much. I felt myself going pale with anger, and I shouted: "What the heli do you mean, you know? How do you know? Why didn't you tell me?"

"I was going to," he said. "This telegram came from Division Traffic an hour and a half ago. I have been working on it." He pointed at the papers covering the desk. "I was going to give you a working timetable for the trains, for your approval, as soon as I had got it ready."

I grabbed the telegram and read it. To Kasel I said: "You had no business not to tell me about this at once. At once, do you hear? I am responsible here. Why, there might——"

Savage interrupted me. "Please finish your squabble some other time," he said, very cold and grating. He sat down, put his Gurkha hat on the table, and leaned forward. "Listen. My battalion, less one company, is

coming here for internal security duties, particularly railway protection. Please take notes, Mr. Kasel. I'm leaving one company in Lalkot, and I'm going to use another to provide platoon guards on the three important bridges in this area. I'm keeping the rest of the battalion here in Bhowani. I'm going to patrol every foot of line every day. I want the use of your motor trolleys."

When Savage finished, I started telling him why all these things couldn't be done. I knew my regulations, and half the things he asked were difficult and the other half impossible. He sat there with his head bent down, saying nothing.

When I finished he looked at me and said: "Your job is to get these things done, Mr. Taylor, not to find reasons why they can't be done."

It was like the electric shock again, or a spike of ice crammed down my throat. I had begun to stutter—how could I make him understand? —when Kasel put his oar in. He said: "I think we can meet the colonel's wishes, Mr. Taylor."

Savage glanced at him and said: "Good. I'll leave it to you." I turned as red as a beetroot. Savage swung round in his chair to face Victoria. He said: "What is your name?"

"Jones."

"Initials and army number?"

"V. WAC-seven-four-six."

Savage motioned to Lieutenant Macaulay to write it down. "Miss Jones, you obviously know the workings of the railway here, and you know the army. I want you to get back into uniform and be a liaison officer between us."

She said: "I'm afraid I have other things to do."

Savage looked her in the eye for a while; then he said: "Very well. That's all for the moment. Please send any new information to me to Kabul Lines, Mr. Taylor. I'm going there now."

Lieutenant Macaulay handed him his hat and said: "Your hat, sir." Macaulay's lips gave me the willies. Savage walked out. Macaulay stopped by Victoria's chair and smiled at her and said: "Let me know if you change your mind, won't you? He's really not so bad to work with." He'd taken off his dark glasses, and I saw that his eyes were funny, too, wide-set and dull. Then he went out.

I sat there on the edge of my desk for a couple of minutes, then I grabbed my topi, jammed it on my head, and yelled at the top of my voice: "Oh, damn all the military to *hell*!" Then I asked Victoria to come along with me.

WHILE I was starting up the motorbike, I asked her why she'd told Savage she couldn't help as a liaison officer. I told her how disappointed I was.

She said: "I don't like him, and I'm not going to work with him. I'd have to call him 'sir'!"

That was true. I was pleased that she didn't like him. But there was another thing; I felt queer because she had stood up to him and told him flatly she wouldn't do it. I ought to have been proud of her, and I was, but I hadn't stood up to him myself, which made the gap bigger between me and her.

That evening at the Institute, Sir Meredith Sullivan made his speech. He told us what we already knew—that the Presidency Education Trust had had a good offer for the school buildings and grounds and wanted to accept it. He was on his way to meet with the trustees in Bombay. He wanted to find out what our feelings were so that he could tell them. He said, "Let anyone speak."

There was a big murmur of people, and soon everyone was shouting, "No, no! It is *our* school! They have no right to sell it!" and so on. It made me feel good just to hear them. No one was going to push *us* down the drain without a fight.

Then I saw Victoria standing up, taller than the others. She lifted her arm and said loudly, "Sir Meredith, I think we ought to ask the Trust to

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Miss Ewing wore a full-skirted dress of white silk brocade with a V-neck and long pointed sleeves, and carried a bouquet of red roses and lilies of the valley. Just as she was leaving the church, the bride was delighted to see a fine black cat walk across her path — a good omen for future luck!

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accept the offer and sell the school. What is going to happen in a few years' time, when——"

People interrupted her, and I felt as if I was being pulled in half, because she was so brave, but she was so wrong and I loved her. As soon as she had finished, though no one could hear what she said after a bit, everyone shouted that they didn't agree. Sir Meredith Sullivan stood there listening to it all.

Finally he said, "You seem to be outnumbered, Miss Jones"—and he knew who she was. Then he spoke to all of us again and said, "You wish me, then, to tell the trustees that St. Thomas's must be kept going at all costs?"

We all shouted, "Yes," and clapped our hands like mad. I watched Victoria as I clapped, and I saw her pushing out of the ballroom through the crowd. Her face was tight and beautiful, but I knew she wanted to cry.

I wanted to go after her, but Sir Meredith leaned over to talk to me, and he kept me for half an hour.

As soon as I could I got out of there, leaving them all, and went quickly to Victoria's house. I knocked. No one answered, so I went in. She wasn't there, and I went out the back door, across the lawn, through the bushes, and on to the line.

The signal light shone red among a lot of floating stars. I knew she would be there, because in the old days we had often met to talk under that signal.

I saw the end of her cigarette and then the shape of her, and I whispered, "Are you there, Victoria? Oh, Victoria, I am glad I found you."

She didn't say anything, and I could see the wet on her eyes by the signal light.

"I love you, Victoria, I know what you feel. I understand, honestly I do." I was trying to find some way of helping her, of persuading her she'd be happier if she closed her eyes and fought alongside the rest of us.

VICTORIA sighed, and I tried to catch her in my arms. Words were no good. I could smell her hair and her scent all together with the hot steel smell of the railway.

I am very strong, and I was crushing her and couldn't let go because if I did I was afraid she'd leave me for ever.

I didn't let her go until she said, not angry but tired, "Let me loose, Patrick. No, I don't hate you. I've just changed, that's all."

I wanted to cry, because she and I had been so close in everything, and we weren't any more; and because Colonel Savage was able to make me so stuttery and foolish; and because everyone was moving into our places, like the Indian crew on the goods train; and because for me there was no question of thinking what was best, what was right—I had to have Victoria, I had to grovel in front of Savage, I had to fight the Indians for my rights.

On that Monday morning, the day the Gurkhas were due to arrive in the afternoon, Victoria rang me up early. Her voice was trembly with anger. She said, "Patrick? Listen to this. This is a telegram for me from the WAC (I) Directorate in Delhi: 'Leave cancelled owing to temporary emergency. Report forthwith repeat forthwith to O.C. First Thirteenth Gurkha Rifles Kabul Lines Bhowani Cantt. for temporary duty as special liaison officer. Administrative details follow. Acknowledge. All informed.' Isn't that the limit?"

She waited for me to say something, but to tell the truth I was delighted.

She said: "Don't you see *he's* done it—Colonel Savage?" She said that he must have sent off a telegram as soon as he left my office on Saturday.

I said: "Will I see you here tomorrow, then, do you think?"

She said: "I suppose so. I've got to find my uniform and get it ironed." And she hung up.

She came down to the yards that afternoon with her father. At the same time Colonel Savage and Lieutenant Macaulay arrived from the opposite direction. Victoria drew herself up and saluted Savage very carefully. He saluted her just as carefully. He looked her up and down as she stood there, and said, "You can wear mufti whenever you like. Women and uniforms don't go together."

"Especially when they've got such good figures. Better than Betty Grable," Lieutenant Macaulay said.

Victoria said to Savage: "This is my father, sir. He is an engine driver."

Savage turned to Mr. Jones and held out his hand. "I'm sorry we had to take your daughter from you, sir."

I started, and Victoria did, too, to hear Savage calling Mr. Jones "sir." Mr. Jones wrung Savage's hand very hard and said: "Oh, don't call me 'sir,' sir."

Savage smiled, a hot, brilliant smile that crinkled all his face round the eyes. "We'll look after your daughter," he said. "She'll be living at home with you. She's going to help Mr. Taylor and me to help you to keep the trains running."

Mr. Jones said: "Good, jolly good! She is a clever girl, Colonel, and works hard. You should see the reports she got while she was at the General Headquarters."

"Colonel Savage doesn't want to hear about that," Victoria said, blushing and angry.

Mr. Jones said: "I expect he knows, girl. You do not become a lieutenant-colonel in the military department while you are such a young man for being a fool. You are not forty, Colonel, I bet?"

"Thirty-four."

I was surprised. Why, he was two years younger than I was. He looked older.

MR. JONES said: "Thirty-four! Well, well. My grandfather was a military man, Colonel. Sergeant J. T. Duck. He retired from the Queen's Fusiliers in eighteen sixty-three. He was the first man to take a train from here to Gondwara when the line was built."

"That's very interesting," Savage said. He looked interested, too, but Macaulay wasn't; he was looking at Victoria and stroking his moustache with one finger, and I suddenly thought that though Victoria would see more of me in this work, she would also see more of the young British officers.

Mr. Jones chattered on happily, delighted to be talking to a lieutenant-colonel. Then Savage said he'd have to ask to be excused, and Mr. Jones wrung his hands again and told him to be sure to come and visit them.

Victoria kept her face stiff. Her father went off, and the colonel began talking to me crisply about routine matters. Macaulay was standing closer to Victoria, and I didn't like it. But there was nothing I could do while the colonel was talking.

I was too close to see what really happened next. What I saw—and Savage saw it, too—was Victoria, leaning, falling back against Macaulay, and Macaulay's arm tight round her. I couldn't tell whether she'd moved away from him and caught her foot in a check rail and stumbled, or whether she'd leaned deliberately against him.

Macaulay said: "Careful now. You nearly fell." His eyes were dull and his face pinched. He took his hand away, and then it was too late for Victoria to say, "Take your hands off me"—even if she'd wanted to. I didn't know. I felt very bad then, with the British officers treating my girl that way.

A telegraph peon with a message came through between the wagons and went up to Colonel Savage. Savage took it, said, "Excuse me," and moved aside to read it. Then he called us.

He said in a low voice: "A Wimpy spotted some men on the line near Dabgaon. It got back to base a couple of hours ago, and they checked up and found no railway men were working in that area. You know this character K. P. Roy is supposed to be in the area? The R.A.F. have been flying rail patrol since yesterday. Taylor, have a motor trolley ready to go out as soon as the first of our trains comes in. It wouldn't do any harm if you came yourself. I'm going. Macaulay, tell the police here. And get four men from the First Rifle Company to come, too."

Macaulay said, "Very good, sir."

Savage snarled, "Don't keep saying, 'Very good, sir.' You're not a damned butler." He hated Macaulay, I was sure, and that cheered me up.

"No, sir," Macaulay said He saluted, red in the face, and went.

SAVAGE watched him go, then turned to Victoria. He said curtly: "When the trains are in, go to the Traffic Office, Taylor's, and stay there until we get back from our patrol. If I send a message, sort it out between Macaulay and Kasel—so that what I say is to be done *is* done. Do you understand?"

"Very good, sir." She said it on purpose, but Savage took no notice.

Later, we went out with the trolley. There was Colonel Savage, myself, a sergeant and four riflemen. One of the riflemen was Savage's orderly, a thin Gurkha of about eighteen called Birkhe. The Gurkhas pushed each other and joked, and Savage made jokes with them which I couldn't understand because he spoke very quickly in Gurkhali.

Dabgaon is twenty-four miles from Bhowani Junction, and we got there in about an hour and a half. Savage got out his map and showed me a pencil mark on it. "This is the map reference the Wimpy gave," he said. We hauled the trolley off the line, and began to search.

Some men from Malra were already on the job, and after an hour they reported to us that nothing was wrong with the line and rails.

Savage had been standing on the top of the cutting, looking all round through his binoculars. The Gurkhas were searching in the fields and along the edge of the jungle.

The sun went down and we all gathered round the trolley. The Gurkhas began to eat chupattis and drink a little out of their water bottles. I was hot, thirsty and tired. I was hungry, too, and I wanted to go back to Bhowani.

But Savage pointed to his map and

Consider your verdict

by

RUSSELL SCOTT, LL.B.

JUST as the train was nearing the station, Mr. Sutton fell from the crowded platform on to the track. Without hesitation Mr. Coldfield, a bystander, jumped down, helped him up, and bundled him back to the platform. Coldfield then scrambled up himself with only three or four seconds to spare.

Sutton was rushed off to hospital for observation, and Coldfield went too, to see how he was.

Sutton had sprained his wrist, while Coldfield had a few bruises and a torn suit. But Coldfield had also missed an important appointment through helping Sutton, and lost a large sum of money as a result.

At Sutton's invitation, Coldfield dined with him and several friends that evening. It appeared that Sutton was quite wealthy, and during the dinner, he leaned over to Coldfield and said loudly: "Please don't take offence, but I am well-off and it would be a pleasure to make you a gift of some sort."

Coldfield was not concerned with making money from the accident, but one of his main interests was the Red Cross.

"Thank you, Mr. Sutton," he replied, "if you would simply replace my ruined suit and give a donation to the Red Cross, I should be most happy."

Sutton agreed and, to appreciative murmurs, said: "In that case I promise to buy you a new suit and give you £500 for the Red Cross as you saved my life."

But for some reason Sutton never kept his promise. As weeks went by Coldfield was both upset and annoyed. He could ill-afford the new suit he had been forced to buy, and the Red Cross would have welcomed the money.

On the one occasion that Coldfield had reminded Sutton of his promise he had been humiliated and insulted by the man's references to "profiteers from other folk's accidents."

So Coldfield collected all the witnesses and sued Sutton on his agreement to pay £500.

Sutton denied all liability. "I agreed in the heat of the moment," he stated. "This is not the sort of promise a court will enforce."

What is your verdict? For the judge's decision, turn to page 38

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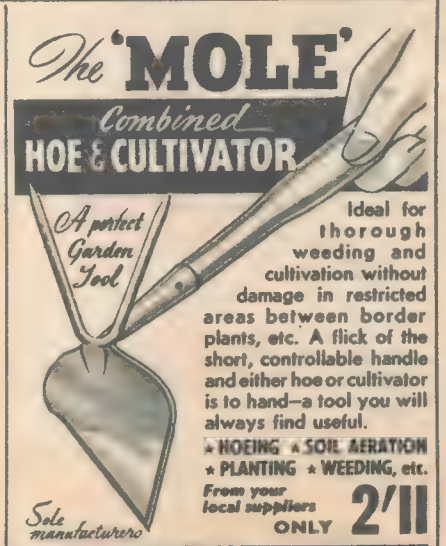

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said: "We'll go to these three villages in turn and ask the headmen if any strangers have been."

I said: "But, Colonel—" and he looked at me, his eyes gleaming in the twilight, and I shut my mouth.

Savage said: "Haven't you got anything to eat?"

I said, "No."

He said: "You are a fool. I warned you. Here." He gave me some of his. He had a tin of bully beef and a few cold chupattis that looked as if they'd been floating round in his haversack for several days, or perhaps in Birkhe's. They were gritty and dusty and tasted of tobacco; he didn't seem to notice, but ate them quickly.

When it was quite dark we set off. Savage used his compass. There was about half a moon, and the leaves crackled under our feet. Dogs began to bark before we got to the first village, and Savage sent two Gurkhas slipping round through the trees to get behind the village before we reached it.

We saw the lights, and then, when we went forward, a gun exploded with a tremendous roar. I dropped to my stomach, and slugs of lead and old bits of glass and nails whistled through the branches above us. It was the village watchman, wide awake and very nervous. Savage shouted: "Don't shoot. We're soldiers."

We went into the village. No one had gone to sleep there yet, and I could see they were all ill at ease. Savage was suspicious and cross-examined the headman for some time.

We left there about ten and marched back through the jungle, across the railway, and across the empty fields to the second village. It was the same procedure, only the watchman didn't shoot at us. I insisted on walking in front that time, because I thought Savage was thinking I was a coward for falling on my face when they fired at us. I had never been fired at before, though I had been in the Auxiliary Force, India, ever since I joined the railway.

I am used to the jungles, but, of course, I had to trip up two or three times while I was leading the way, just because Savage was expecting me to, and finally he told me to get back and let a Gurkha lead. He was terribly impatient. My shoes were ordinary thin shoes, and my feet hurt, and by then I was hot, thirsty and tired.

THE moon was dull orange when we set out for the last village. While we were moving in, going very quietly, I got a tickle in my throat and had to cough. At once something went *pad-pad* a little in front. Savage said in Hindustani, "Stand still, or I fire!"

The shuffling noise went on among the thin thorn bushes and the rocks. I saw a shape moving. Beside me, Savage pulled his carbine to his shoulder and fired four times very quickly—*bang-bang-bang-bang!*

The shape had gone, or the movement had stopped, I don't know which. I had forgotten how much my feet hurt. The thing might be K. P. Roy with a gun, but what frightened me more was that I was with these people who simply shot at anything that didn't do at once what they told it to.

We spread out and went forward, searching everywhere. In the village they told us that strangers had been there early in the day. Some of them had left before dusk, and one had just gone. No one knew who he was, but the headman described him, and Savage made a note.

It was two o'clock before we got to Bhowani, and I realized that Savage had kept Victoria all that time in my office with Kasel. Macaulay had probably been there most of the time, too. We were covered with dust, my clothes were torn and my shoes cracked.

Macaulay wasn't there—only Kasel and Victoria and us. Victoria was pale, and her eyes looked large and dry. I couldn't be sure, but I thought she was shaking a bit.

"Now can we all go to bed?" I asked Savage.

He didn't answer me, but picked up a field telephone that was on Victoria's table. The Gurkhas must have put it in during the night. Savage spoke on it to his people in the cantonments. When he had finished, Victoria stood up and said: "May I go now, sir?"

"Yes," he said. "The Collector's out of Bhowani and won't be back until lunchtime. I'm going to see him at five o'clock. Meet me then at his bungalow. Taylor, you'd better come, too. Bring a pad and pencil, Miss Jones. You know shorthand?"

"Yes, sir. Very good, sir."

He frowned at her, but said nothing and went out, with Birkhe following in his footsteps as he always did.

I took Victoria home, walking slowly because of my feet, but then I began to tell her all about the evening, and soon I forgot my feet and was walking faster.

Was it K. P. Roy that Savage had shot at? Had he hit him? Or had he fired at a peaceful traveller?

Victoria said nothing all the while, but by the time we came to the signal I felt fine. I said, "Good night, Victoria." I caught her in my arms and kissed her.

SHE was like the signal post, stiff and cold and hard. I stopped kissing her and asked her what was the matter.

She hit me as hard as she could with her fist, right on the nose. The blood spurted out, and my eyes watered. I staggered about for a minute, then I gasped, "Oh, Vicky, don't do that. What *is* the matter?"

She stood there close to me in the dark, breathing like a train. She said, "Macaulay tried to make love to me. You make me feel cheap and beastly. All of you. Except Kasel. He's the only gentleman here. Now go away!"

She ran, stumbling, towards her house.

I hardly slept the rest of that night. I got through my morning's work somehow and hung around, smoking cigarettes and drinking tea, until I could go to Victoria's, a little before four. We were supposed to go to the Collector's with Colonel Savage at five. Before we went I meant to find out about this Macaulay business so that I could tell Savage and see that Macaulay was punished.

Victoria was sitting reading in the parlour when I got there. She must have known what I had come for, but all she said was, "You're an hour early, Patrick. I'm reading." She spoke quickly.

I said: "Victoria, what happened last night?"

"It's none of your business," she said. "I can look after myself."

I cried: "You can't! Tell me, I must know. Then we'll tell Colonel Savage. I'll tell him by myself if you will feel embarrassed. How—how bad was it? What did he do?"

She told me, reluctantly. She had been working with Kasel, and then it had got dark and Macaulay had come in. He had a bulging haversack with him. After a while, Kasel had gone off for his dinner, and Macaulay had emptied the haversack. It contained two bottles of beer, a cold chicken, metal plates, knives, forks, salt, pepper, bread, napkins—everything. Macaulay had sat down on the table close to her and said: "That's for us. My name's Graham. Do you like beer?"

So they'd eaten, and after it, Macaulay had attacked her. . . .

"I was frightened, worse than I've

Consider your verdict

IN the case on page 37, the judge ruled that an agreement had been made. But in all cases of enforceable agreements (except where a deed is signed) there must be some "consideration" on each side, he said—each party had to do, or give, or promise something to make the agreement enforceable. In English law the "consideration" must be present or future, and Coldfield's act was past when Sutton made his promise. A past "consideration" is not enough. So despite his heroism Coldfield could recover nothing. (*This is the probable verdict, based on actual cases*).

"Save me some of that delicious cream sauce, dear. I have to repair a couple of loose tiles in the bathroom"

ever been," Victoria said. "There's something wrong with that man. His face goes peculiar—hateful. I opened my mouth to scream, and at that moment Ranjit knocked and came in. He stopped in the doorway, and I broke free from Macaulay. Macaulay turned round slowly. I ran to my chair and sat down, trembling, shivering. Then Macaulay went."

"Did Kasel see anything?" I asked. I couldn't have borne it if he had.

Victoria raised her eyebrows a little. She said: "No, Patrick. He didn't see. But he knew. He got me some water. He was blushing. He wanted to report it to Colonel Savage, but——"

"My God, he'd better not!" I shouted. "I don't want any bloody wogs mixed up in this."

"Oh, you don't?" Victoria said. "Well, that's too bad, because Ranjit *is* mixed up in it, and he's the only one of all of you men who doesn't make me feel horrible."

She took her eyes off my face for the first time. Then she spoke quite gently, as if it was all over and we were having a chat, an ordinary talk, about a picnic or something. She said: "Ranjit has renounced his Sikh religion. He's an atheist. His mother made him one. She says religion is the opiate of the people, the thing that helps keep people in their chains. He lives with her, here in the city. She is a wonderful woman, he says—a widow, of course. Ranjit's a B.A. from Punjab University, you know, and——"

I shouted: "Do not keep talking about Kasel! Come on. It is time for us to go to the Collector's."

"All right," she said. "But you're not to mention anything about this, Patrick. I don't want to hear another word about it."

"We'll see about that," I said.

VICTORIA's voice rose. She said: "I've told you, Patrick. I've warned you. No, I'm not coming on your motor-bike. I have an army bicycle. I will need it after we're finished there."

"I'll give you a tow." She was so worked up about me and Macaulay that I decided I had better not tell anyone after all.

It was just unlucky that as we turned into the Collector's driveway I saw Colonel Savage and Birkhe right under my wheel. I jammed on my brakes, and Savage jumped aside, but Victoria wobbled forward and her bike keeled over and she had to slip off quickly and very awkwardly in her tight skirt.

Savage made some joke, and that did it! I jerked the motor-bike on to its stand and I shouted: "We have had enough of those kind of jokes, sir! Victoria is under your orders because you were unfair and sent telegrams to your friends in Delhi, but she does not have to be insulted."

Savage had stopped smiling and looked at me with his blue eyes going flat and calm.

I said: "I am going to report something else that happened, too. Last night. It is what happened to Miss Jones. I——"

Savage interrupted very quickly. He said: "I know. I'm sorry I ever left Miss Jones alone with Kasel in the office at night. I'm not used to having women working under me. Was it serious enough for me to take up further, or——?"

I could not believe my ears, and Victoria was staring at him, too. My God, I thought, was it really Kasel? What if everything happened just as Victoria said—only the other way round? Macaulay must have reported something to Savage already. If that was true, did it mean that Victoria had been egging Kasel on?

MY mouth was hanging open. I was dumbfounded. Savage said: "But do think seriously before you make an official complaint, Miss Jones. It would not be a small matter—a year or two in prison, at least. If it had been a soldier it would be worse. And as for an officer! My God, an officer would get ten years and cashiering. So—here, let me wheel your bike." He took her bicycle, and I began to push the motor-bike alongside, feeling in a daze.

"Forgive me about the telegram. Mr. Taylor says I was unfair, and I expect you feel the same, but please remember I've got a job to do, and five hundred men to look after. It is my duty to them to get the best help I can. Here we are. The Collector wants us to go straight in. After you, Miss Jones. Go ahead, Taylor."

And then we were inside the Collector's study.

For a few minutes I couldn't concentrate. I didn't know what to believe about the Kasel business. I tried to catch Victoria's eye, but she did not look at me once.

Govindaswami and Savage had introduced themselves by then. Govindaswami told Savage the same story he'd told us the week before. Then Savage explained what action he was taking, and gave an outline of our abortive search last night.

The Collector listened in silence. At the end, he said: "A pity. . . . But there is other trouble brewing now—a strike by the Union of Railway Workers of India."

That was an Indian trade union. None of *us* belonged to it, though they kept trying to get us to join.

Govindaswami said: "The union's central committee is meeting in Calcutta now. I'm trying to find out what is known about the strike here. The chairman of the union's Bhowani branch is a fellow called Kartar Singh—another Sikh."

Savage waited, and Govindaswami went on: "I'd like Miss Jones to talk

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[NCT 78]

"It's stopped raining, Agnes"

to him." His gold tooth glittered when he talked. "He knows she is a sensible and sympathetic young woman. Kartar's a sensible fellow himself, though he can't often afford to show it, or he'd lose his union position. Do you mind, Miss Jones?"

"I will do my best," Victoria said, but not very enthusiastically.

When the meeting was over, I went ahead on the motor-bike to the station. I wanted to find Kartar Singh before Victoria arrived on her bicycle. Govindaswami hadn't asked me, a railway officer, to speak to the fellow, which was just like his damned nerve, but I was going to be there all the same.

By the time I'd found that Kartar Singh was somewhere round the North Box, Victoria had arrived. I told her where Kartar Singh would be, and walked with her. She stopped and said: "There's no need for you to come."

I said: "He may refuse to answer you. He'll talk to me. He is just a stuck-up coolie."

She must have seen that I had made up my mind, so we started out. I spotted Kartar Singh in the box, and we went up the steps.

Kartar Singh was stocky and strong with a thick black beard. He wore a dark blue turban, and his legs were short and thick and hairy. His face was broad and expressionless.

I told him that the miss-sahiba wanted to speak to him. He looked at Victoria and said: "What does the lieutenant miss-sahiba want to speak to me about? I am only a coolie."

He was actually smiling at her—like his damned cheek—and Victoria smiled, too, and said: "I'm not really a lieutenant, Kartar. I'm Driver Jones's daughter. I'd like to speak to you—about the railway. Can you come outside a minute?"

The telegraph bells kept ringing, and the lights were moving on the diagram. The other signalman went there and back among the levers.

Kartar Singh said: "Very well, miss-sahiba," and followed us down the steep steps to the ground. When we got down Victoria said: "There's no need for you to stay, Patrick."

I said: "I will stay, Victoria. I have nothing else to do."

"Very well," she said. "Very well." She turned to Kartar Singh. "Kartar, is there going to be a strike here?"

He looked at her without moving a muscle of his face.

I said: "Answer the lady!"

Victoria said: "Patrick, will you please shut up?" And to Kartar: "You know I'm working for the army. They're worried in case a strike might lead to violence. They have to be ready to help the police, and you know how unsettled people are everywhere."

"We in the union will not be violent," Kartar Singh said. "But we will not be forced to work, either. That has happened in the past."

Victoria said: "Can you tell us about the strike, then? Surely it's not secret."

"I can't tell you, miss-sahiba." He looked at her, and she looked at him. Then he looked at me, and then she looked at me. He said: "We have cause to strike."

This was too jolly much. I said: "No, you haven't, no cause at all! You are just getting jolly well too big for your boots, that's all."

Victoria turned to Kartar Singh and said very politely: "Would you mind waiting here a minute? I'll be right back."

Kartar Singh nodded. Victoria took my arm and led me a little apart. When we got fifty yards or so away from the North Box, she said: "Patrick, I came back from Delhi ready to love you. And I found you were everything I didn't want to be. When I'm in trouble, you don't notice. When I'm happy, you spoil it. When I'm depressed, you are more depressed. When I ask you to do something, you don't do it. When I ask you not to do something, you do it. You allow Colonel Savage to make a fool of me. You think I was necking with Ranjit last night—oh, I know you do, don't try to deny it. And now you're preventing me from doing my work."

I stammered, "B-but, Victoria——"

She whispered angrily: "Don't 'but' me, you *fool*! You're a bully, and you're self-satisfied, and—and, oh, you're a damn cheechee! Now go away. I don't want to see you again except on duty."

"But, Victoria," I said.

She was gone, walking quickly back towards the North Box.

I SAT for a long time in the refreshment room, drinking beer. At first I was crying and trying to hide my face by turning my back to the room. Victoria and I were going off on separate lines, and we used to have such fun together. I had tried to bring her back to our line, the only main line possible for Anglo-Indians, but she wouldn't come. And I couldn't go where she seemed to want to go. Perhaps she had tried to come my way and found it was impossible.

I drank more beer. With the beer, I began to get angry. She would not come back to me because she had become a fast, loose girl in the army, that was the truth. She was necking with Macaulay and making eyes at Kasel—a wog, my God—and she thought *we* were finished. She hated me and did not care what happened to me. I said to myself: My God, I will show her she can't push me around!

That was a time of the evening when, before Victoria came back, I often took Rose Mary out for a ride. I left the refreshment room and drove like hell to Number 4 Collett Road. Rose Mary was in. She was reading, which she never did. It was just as though she'd been waiting for me.

To be continued next week

MR. HARDY, DARLING

Continued from page 17

face sharpened. "Mr. Hardy, a little bird told me the chief liked that report of yours, but another little bird told me there's a man coming from Western Aircraft who could get Mr. Champion's job. You wouldn't want that to happen. Mr. Hardy, an operation requiring low cunning is needed."

For the duration of a deep-drawn breath, Lewis wanted to be assistant to the chief, because then, surely, Lois wouldn't feel called upon to make the tremendous sacrifice of working after they were married. He wanted the promotion violently enough to do any of the things Charlie would do to get it, were their positions reversed. In the next moment he knew it was no good; he wasn't Charlie.

"Has Miss Ruston come in yet?" he asked slowly. Better if Lois knew nothing until the matter was settled. This was her last day on loan to Experimental, so perhaps. . . .

"Lois? She was in. Then she got a call to report to chief of Structures. Sounded like good news for Lois."

So soon? Lewis felt as though the world had been pulled suddenly from under him. Charlie was staring at him. He made a sudden, palms-down gesture. "Mr. Hardy, I've got my future to think about, just like anybody else. Frankly, I thought that if you stepped up I'd step up behind you. But"—Charlie fished something from his pocket—"see this? It's my request for transfer to Structures. I wrote it a couple of weeks ago, when things looked dead for me around here. I'm going to put it in now."

Lewis looked at his assistant. "All right," he said wearily. "Transfer. In the meantime, you can finish that work on induced drag I turned over to you last month." He paused. "As for the rumours of my taking Mr. Champion's place, forget them."

Charlie's shrug was a mute "Well, don't say I didn't warn you." Charlie was as good as gone. Now Lewis would have the thankless task of breaking in a new man, unless. . . . There was Miss Greenway. Why couldn't she be trained to fill Charlie's place, and better?

FILLED with a happy omniscience at his power to lift Miss Greenway from the ranks, he looked back at her. Her eyes were bent diligently to her work. Today she wore a yellow-green blouse, trim and neat as all her other blouses. It was the colour of spring, of newly opened buds and tender grasses.

Suddenly he came to himself. He sat down heavily at his desk. Either he wasn't well or the strain of events had proved too much for him. He disliked to imagine what the efficient Miss Greenway would think if she knew what nonsense he had been thinking. The very thought of her knowing made him dizzy, and he didn't remember ever being dizzy in all his twenty-nine years.

And then Lois burst in. "Oh, Lewis." Her joy washed over him, dizziness and all. "You're looking at the chief of Structures' new secretary!"

An instinctive protest rose in him, but it sank away, unsaid. She was so happy. With no promotion of his own, he had no right to cloud up her blue sky.

"That's marvellous." He forced a heartiness he did not feel. "That's really wonderful, Lois."

Her smile was a lovely, brilliant thing. "Darling, I knew you'd be pleased." She floated back to her own desk. He heard Charlie intercept her, heard them talking. And with his new painful perceptiveness, he knew Charlie was informing her of the vacancy in Experimental and Lewis's peculiar attitude towards it. He felt their eyes on the back of his head and was deeply conscious of his deficiencies.

He plunged into the work on his desk.

Minutes—hours—later, aware of a vague emptiness, he looked about him with dazed inquiry. And there he was again, grounded in the same old chill, windowless office. It was empty except

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MR FRANK TUDD
A PROPHET WITHOUT HONOUR
I-er-I-should-
You should be locked up!
Answer the question!
Sit down, Todd!
I was warned that Todd's a flop these days. I don't know that we should invite him to speak again
Well, he used to make 'em sit up! And he believes so firmly in what we believe
They wouldn't listen... I know I'm right... but I just haven't got the strength to go on fighting any longer. I don't know, I feel limp, and worn-out, and tired. I never used to
See the doctor, Frank
AT THE DOCTOR'S
I never have insomnia. Yet I even wake tired
Look, Mr. Todd. It just isn't enough to rest your body by night. Your brain and nerves - your whole personality as well - must relax while you sleep. Otherwise, you will wake tired. There's nothing seriously wrong with you - so I recommend a cup of hot Horlicks every night
SO HORLICKS EVERY NIGHT
SOME TIME LATER
So, Ladies and Gentlemen, the facts show -
(whispers) There's some sense in what 'e says
Oh, I'm sure they agreed with you this time, Frank!
We-ll - I doubt it, Mary, but they did listen.
(THINKS) One of these days they'll see I'm right. I can fight on
HORLICKS

for him. And, yes, Miss Greenway. A napkin was spread neatly on the desk beside her packet of sandwiches. She was just biting into a sandwich.

From where he sat, it seemed to be a roast-beef sandwich, thick with lettuce, tomato and slices of cucumber. Not a sandwich to be bought for money at the works canteen, it was the kind a person lovingly constructed out of his own well-stocked pantry. He stared at it, fascinated.

Becoming aware that Miss Greenway had, for quite some time, been suspended around her sandwich, mesmerized by his stare, he grew hot with embarrassment. He must go back and beg her pardon.

But the opportunity was lost, for, just at that moment, Lois and Charlie came in. From all appearances, they had lunched together. For one clear, dispassionate second, Lewis was aware of how well they looked together. He flushed as Lois intercepted his gaze. She seemed on the point of saying something to him, hesitated. Then, with a resigned little gesture, she went on without stopping by his desk.

In a flash of misery, pure and simple, Lewis envied Charlie. He also disliked him intensely.

Mrs. Hubbard, the secretary, returned from lunch. The chief was still out, so she settled down to a lengthy telephone conversation with her daughter. Lewis closed his ears and went back to upper space.

Once he opened his flask and had a scalding, viscous cup. Once Miss Greenway's hand laid a stack of computation sheets on his desk. "Mr. Hardy?" she murmured.

LEWIS grunted and then, remembering he had been going to apologize to her for something, he looked up. But she was gone. Some day, he thought clearly and firmly, he would catch the elusive Miss Greenway and explain to her exactly how important she was to him and to the firm.

He worked on.

"Lewis, about tonight." Lois's voice was in his ear. "Lewis." She spoke again, softly, patiently. "About tonight, I——"

"Oh, tonight." He wakened to a vague memory of commitment, something about an ice revue. "I'm sorry, Lois, but I've got this thing going here. I—I won't be able to make it. I'll call you tomorrow," he added hastily. For a moment, her face was blank; then she made a resigned, forgiving little *moué*. Sighed. "All right, Lewis, you do that. By the way, have you still got the tickets? I mean, if you're not using them——"

The tickets? Oh, the tickets. He emptied his wallet, his coat pockets, trouser pockets, and found them at last in his desk drawer. Eagerly, he gave them to her. He hoped that she and What's-Her-Name, the girl at the boarding house, would have a good time at the ice revue. How beautiful she was and how considerate, to take a broken date so well! His eyes followed her as she walked out. She walked out with Charlie, as a matter of fact. He seemed to have been waiting for her.

Mrs. Hubbard left, stout heels clumping. Faint noises of departure and arrival filtered in from other parts of the vast building.

Contained as he was in rich silence and richer creation, Lewis couldn't help being annoyed at the sound of the outer door opening. He didn't even look up until the chief's voice said: "Hardy, if you'll lift your nose out of those papers."

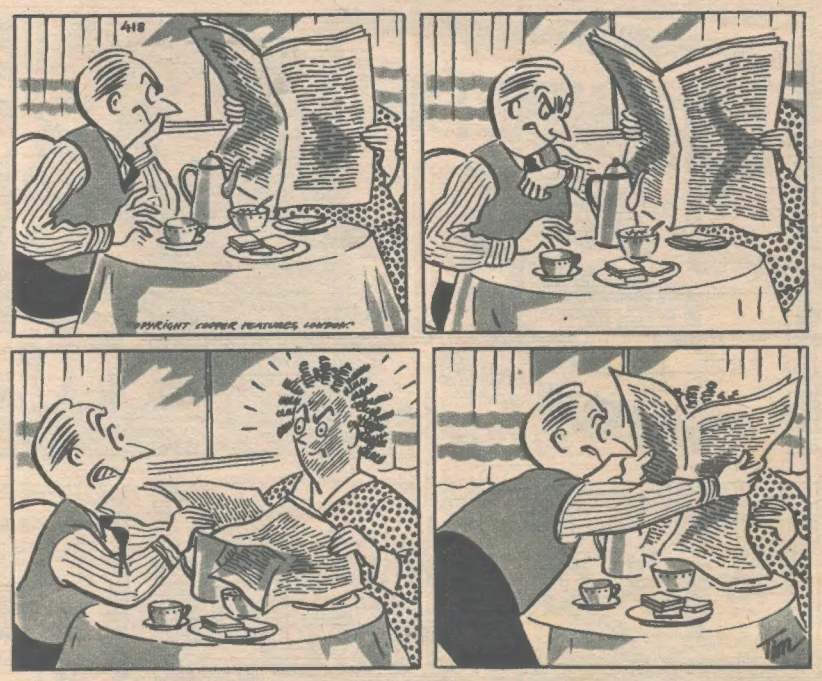
When Lewis, with a start, did just that, the chief said: "How would you like to be my assistant, replacing Mr. Champion?"

Lewis found it difficult, on such short notice, to extricate himself from the detachment peculiar to upper-space men. "I'd like it, Mr. Hardlet," he said mildly. "If you're sure I'm big enough for the job."

The chief was staring down into the mess on Lewis's desk. "You're big enough," he granted absently. Then, in an accelerated voice: "What's this you're working on?"

Lewis's detachment split then and fell away like a worn-out skin. "You

OH, JOHNNY! *by TIM*



know we've had trouble finding the optimum-sweep angle on the delta planforms. Well, we've been ignoring Reynolds-number effects. Look at the correlation of test data now."

With passionate intensity, Lewis explained. The chief asked questions and he answered them. And then, abruptly, he ran out of fuel. "This is where I am now, a long way from the solution. I may be wasting the company's time, yours and——"

"Rubbish! Keep going!" the chief said crisply. "You'll need more girls on the calculators! I'll get 'em for you first thing Monday morning. Now, about this fellow Sharpe. Think he can step into your shoes?"

"Mr. Sharpe said today he was requesting transfer to Structures. Didn't he turn the request in to you?"

"Must be on my desk. Structures, eh? Let him go! Anyone else you'd prefer?"

"Well, there's Miss Greenway," Lewis said seriously, feeling his heart beat fast. "I'd be happy to accept full responsibility for training her."

"H'm. Might be a union matter." The chief glanced at his watch, stifled a cry. "Oh, my! We've got a dinner party." He paused at the door. "You'd better go home, too, Hardy. Women don't understand voluntary overtime."

"I—I'm not married, Mr. Hardlet."

"Oh. Well. Good night, Hardy."

Alone once more, Lewis became aware of an ache which seemed to be centred in his stomach. He tried to get back to work, but his power of concentration had gone. Thoughts hopped about in his head like fleas.

He could have told the chief he was going to be married. Lois. He'd tell her tomorrow about his promotion, he'd take her, one last time, to the Coq d'Argent and tell her. Then she would name the day and give notice to the chief of Structures. She would learn to cook and keep the three- to four-bedroomed house, and his dream would come true.

He tried to picture it: Lois waiting for him in the evenings, Lois smiling happily as she bore succulent dishes to the dining-table—but it must have been that he was tired. All he could picture clearly was Miss Greenway's face, alight with joy, when he told her that her talents were to be rewarded.

"My dear Miss Greenway, because of your phenomenal efficiency, your intuition which borders on the psychic, your superior intelligence, you are now assistant to the assistant!"

And then the door opened and Miss Greenway walked in. She was carrying a small burden of computation sheets. There was a carbon smudge on her round little chin and her bangs were in charming disorder. "I thought you might need these, since you were working tonight," she said.

He was stunned speechless. Never in his tenure at the firm had anyone stayed overtime, voluntarily and without pay, to assist him. She walked over and laid the sheets on his desk. Perhaps it was the fragrance that came with her, something distilled not only of flowers but the essence of spring itself, that caused his sudden, violent dizziness.

"Thank you," he said weakly. "Thank you so mu——" He seemed to be falling off on his left wing. Most curious and embarrassing. His sight was failing, too. "Miss Greenway," he said dully, "where are you?"

"I'm here. Drink this, Mr. Hardy."

A cup was in his hand. Responding to her voice's firm urgency, he lifted the cup. Tilted it. Liquid swirled down his dry throat. It was coffee. But not from his flask. He had never tasted coffee so wonderful as this. He mentioned this fact.

"I made it this morning," she said. And then, fiercely: "Mr. Hardy, I know you missed lunch. Have you had dinner yet?"

Lunch? Dinner? His vision cleared a bit and he made out the small, concerned face, the hair that looked as though a spring breeze had riffled it. He smiled, and kept on smiling.

"Mr. Hardy, I think you'd better eat this!" Something was thrust into his other hand. And then, mingled with spring, there were the solid fragrances of beef.

The sandwich was wonderful. The coffee was wonderful. She was wonderful. Wonderful name, Greenway, but surely she had another. And then he came to himself. He stared, aghast, at the thing in his hand. "Why, Miss Greenway, I'm eating your sandwich!"

"Oh, but I always bring three," she said, unwrapping a twin to the one in his hand. Then, thoughtfully: "I ate only one for lunch today."

HIS embarrassment deepened at the memory of himself staring her out of appetite. And then it vanished in surprise that this small, slender girl habitually ate three of these doorsteps each noon. He tried not to stare.

"Did you make them yourself?" he asked humbly, wonderingly.

She nodded.

Lewis could find no words. He said, at last: "You've heard, of course, that Mr. Champion is no longer with us?"

She nodded, and he was touched to see the sadness in her eyes. "Poor Mr. Champion," she murmured.

Lewis felt very close to her. It was somehow fitting that she should be the first to know. "I am to take his place. Mr. Hardlet just told me."

Her eyes filled with a quiet shining. "That's nice," she said softly. "That's really wonderful."

They sat there smiling at each other. His vertigo was back again, shot through, suddenly, by an uprush of warmth. After all, she had very nearly saved his life.

"Miss Greenway?" He leaned towards her and saw a blush of pink rise under her skin. "Miss Greenway, I think you are a wonderful girl. I mean that from the bottom of my heart."

Her blush deepened. It was like walking into the heart of spring.

"Miss Greenway, how would you like to be my assistant?"

Abruptly the pink drained from her cheeks. The glow fled from her eyes. Her lips trembled. "Oh, no, Mr. Hardy, I couldn't—I mean, the only reason I got this job is that my father thinks every girl ought to work for a year, so that after she's married she can better appreciate her hus——" Her voice broke. "My year's up, Mr. Hardy. I'm leaving——"

"But, Miss Greenway, you can't leave," he said desperately, wondering that she could have misunderstood him so completely. "Don't you understand? I'm offering you a promotion. You will occupy a position here that no woman has ever occupied!"

But when the desperate flow of his words has ceased, her expression had not changed for the better. If anything, it had worsened. She stared at him with darkened, distended eyes, her lips still trembling. "I'm leaving, Mr. Hardy."

"Miss Greenway!" His voice shook. "What have I done? Why don't you want to work with me?"

She gasped. Colour flamed back into her face. Tears welled up in her grey eyes. "Oh, Mr. Hardy, it isn't that!" she cried. "I think you're a genius—the f-finest, kindest, most wo-wonderful man I ever knew."

Choking off a sob, she leaped up, spilling waxed paper and napkin from her lap, and rushed from the office. Stunned, Lewis sat in the silence. He couldn't understand it. She had stayed overtime for him, she had shared her lunch with him, the best coffee in the world and the best sandwiches. She had expressed sincere pleasure at news of his promotion.

Everything had been so friendly and nice, like a picnic. And, flowing between them, that whatever-it-was that made working with Miss Greenway such a pleasure. Then—then he had offered her a promotion any other girl would have jumped at, and she had run out of the office, crying. Crying as though her heart were broken.

STARING helplessly at his paperweight, that happy little world in which nothing ever went wrong, he started through the sequence again. He had just reached the whatever-it-was that made working with Miss Greenway such a pleasure when his recapitulation came to a dead stop. The girl in the paperweight—the little red-capped girl leaning just so to keep the boy's toboggan from careening, and loving every minute of it—looked like Miss Greenway!

And, suddenly, like an equation so simple that it was awesome, everything became clear. Heart-wrenchingly clear, including the enormity of his error. There she had sat, so close he could have wiped the smudge off her darling chin, and he had offered her a promotion—a promotion!

"You—you old Jessie!" In his extremity, he borrowed the epithet from Charlie, whom he could no longer dislike, or even envy, for Charlie would end up with Lois, and if ever two people were better suited to each other, it could only be Lewis himself and Miss Greenway. And he had lost her.

"You Jessie!" he cried aloud. "You stupid, blind, deaf-and-dumb Jessie!"

But hadn't she called him a genius? The finest, kindest, most wonderful man she had ever known?

He knocked over the chair, getting out of it. His heels pounded on the asphalt tiles. She couldn't have gone far.

"Stop! You! Mr. Hardy!" yelled the guard, but for once Lewis didn't give a damn for security.

He caught up with her down the first floor, in the hall. "Miss Greenway—darling!" he panted. "What is your first name?"

THE END

Was Mike old-fashioned?
He thought, in order to produce a good evening meal, a woman had to stay at home all day. Now, thanks to Batchelors tender, succulent Peas he knows better . . .

Spode China by W. T. Copeland & Sons Ltd.

They're always nicer!

That's why 4 out of 6 women* prefer BATCHELORS PEAS

The most wonderful thing about Batchelors wonderful peas is their consistent high quality. They are *always* plump, tender, tasty. The reason is this. Batchelors do *more* than buy the best peas. They test the best peas. When, and only when, the peas have passed many searching tests are they canned. That's why *only the best peas get into Batchelors cans!*

**A nation-wide survey shows that of all the women who named their favourite brand of peas, 4 out of every 6 preferred Batchelors.*

For the love of Mike!

WE'D BEEN MARRIED SIX WEEKS. Life was wonderful—but hectic! My fashion-artist's job meant that supper was sometimes late. Suddenly one night Mike blew up. Said it was ridiculous to try combining a career with running a home, and I ought to give up my job. I lost my temper, called him mean and selfish, and burst into tears.

"What shall I do?" I wailed to Jane at the office next day. "Every career girl has time to cook these days," said she, "—with Batchelors Peas to help her. You try them."

The next night we invited Jane and her husband Tom to dinner. I gave them grilled fish, fried potatoes, and Batchelors tasty melt-in-the-mouth Peas. One look at Mike's face told me how impressed he was . . .

Today as busy wife *and* fashion-artist, I'm eternally grateful to Batchelors Peas for quick, delicious meals and a contented husband. Do *you* keep a stock of Batchelors Peas in your store-cupboard? They are such a help; you can get them in all sorts of can sizes.

Batchelors WONDERFUL PEAS . . . they're always nicer

'B' for Batchelors

BPF33/80

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HUGE 2-in-1 FIRST PRIZE

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CELEBRATION CHEQUE

Lump sum of £600 if preferred to Pension-plus-Cash First Prize

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50 "Bullets" Seasons, 1,500 new "Good Shot" Awards, each with £5 opportunity—see coupon below for details of £100 Bonus

FIRST competitor since 1939 to win a Cash-plus-Pension prize in *Bullets* heard the news by telegram last Friday. The winner's name and *Bullet* will be announced next week.

Mr. R. C. LEWIS
He won years of comfort and handfuls of cheques

Now comes postwar Cash-plus-Pension prize No. 2. For a *Bullet* on your coupon below, *you* can join the scores of prewar prize-winners for whom regular cash payments have done so much. One of them is seen on right, Mr. R. C. Lewis (10 Culverhouse Road, Luton).

"My regular cheques," he says, "have for years provided comforts and luxuries which would otherwise have been denied myself and family." One of those "regular cheques" you see below, actually in the hands of Mr. Lewis.

To win a regular income *and* £100 cash for a *Bullet* this week, first read the prize efforts on this page. Then, noting instructions below, post off your *Bullets* by Easter Tuesday, April 20.

THIS WAY to the PRIZE-LIST

To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

British Brains	"Welcome Home!"
Spring, The Decorator	Shock For The Scientist
Church Of The Future	Plugging Away
A Happy Ship	Like The Wind
Pensioner's Problem	Grandpa Remembers
Desert Of Loneliness	A Mere Novice
Not Far Off	Down Came The Rain And
When Everything's Ready	Jumped At
Sword In Hand	Got A Bit Huffy
If I Had The Courage	At The Jumble Sale

Incomplete "Examples"—see instructions

.....Of Our Time	Improving On.....
Hiding Her.....	A Dirty.....
With Half A.....	Chucked The.....In

Chief Winners, 1,927

FIRST PRIZE, £1,000 plus Ideal Kitchen: E. E. Channell, 7 Hatton Road, Blacon, Chester:

The Comet Opportunity—I Missed, Stargazing!

£50: B. T. Chalk, 361 Snariton Lane, Melksham, Wilts: THE LAST PART—OUTDOING ALL—DOWN MALL?

£25: D. Edwards, 50 Dartmouth Park Road, London, N.W.5: THE DISCARDED PART — SMOULDERING—*Definitely* DANGEROUS "SMOKE"!

OTHER AWARDS. £10: B. Armer, 26 Strong Close Way, Keighley, Yorks: WITH A NEW VIEW—FROM PEW — NEW *You*! £9: Mrs. D. Mackey, 127 Church Street, Wolverton, Bucks: WITH A NEW VIEWPOINT—MAN, "STEPPING ON" *Self*. £8: S. S. Rounce, 12 Devereaux Road, Ebley, Stroud: SNAGS AND PITFALLS—AND *Prospects*? TAKE IT! £7: D. H. Smith (W.O.1), R.A.O.C., H.Q. 61, Lor. Inf. Bde., B.A.O.R., 29: FROM RAGS TO RICHES—THE FIRST R's "RESOLVE." £6: A. Wilson, 3 Upper Vauxhall Street, Collyhurst, Manchester, 9: A HARD MASTER—TO *Displease* APPARENTLY, IKE! £5: D. Falconer, c/o Irvine, 1 Newmont Hill, Forfar: FROM RAGS TO RICHES — NEWSPAPERS "COVERING HIM" *Still*. £5: H. T. Parry, 112 Aldborough Road, Newbury Park, Ilford, Essex: WHERE THE CABBAGE GROWS—JUDGING BY PRICE—EVEREST!

For ten winners of £2 10s., see "*Bullets*" *Bulletin*. 50 "Bullets" Seasons and 1,500 "Good Shot" Prizes have also been posted.

PRIZES value over £1,000—USE THIS COUPON

EXAMPLE ..... |6d.

BULLET .....

EX. ..... |6d.

B. .....

EX. ..... |6d.

B. .....

EX. ..... |6d.

B. .....

£100 BONUS An extra £100 cash will be shared amongst the 70 chief winners whose successful *Bullet* was one of four or more on single coupon or plain-paper entry sheet.

1,932

Special Easter Closing Postmark TUES., APRIL 20

I agree to Rules and enclose P.O.

Value .....

No. .....

Signed.....

Address.....

.....

.....

GRAND HOLIDAY OFFER COMING — GET YOUR "BULLETIN"

With this coupon (which you can enclose with your entry) send P.O. 1s. for six weeks' "*Bullets*" *Bulletin* at REDUCED SERIES RATE—first copy dated May 1. Every issue contains extra *Bullets* winners to guide you to success.

P.O. 1s. No. .....

FREE!

New entrants simply complete this label for free and post-free specimen *Bulletin*.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

745

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. or stamps as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. If using P.O. make payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated. Forces half-rate in *Bullets* for entry-fees not exceeding 2s. if coupons personally completed and Service rank indicated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in "*Bullets*" *Bulletin* dated May 8 and in JOHN BULL dated May 15), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, May 1, for early news of *Bullets* No. 1,932 result.)

POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 1,932, "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

For REALLY RAPID RELIEF from

ACID INDIGESTION

Just chew a couple of *'Milk of Magnesia' Tablets—by correcting acidity they give prompt relief from heartburn, flatulence and all other forms of acid indigestion.

'Milk of Magnesia' Tablets have a pleasant, mild mint flavour and are so convenient to carry with you.

Handy Pocket Packs—9d. & 1/4½
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'MILK of MAGNESIA' TABLETS

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*'Milk of Magnesia' is the trade mark of Phillips' preparation of magnesia.

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Read letter from Mrs. M. M., of BRISTOL

"Have had for over 8 years a very bad irritation, which was always worse at night, causing many hours of lost sleep. Have tried countless remedies but none had any lasting effect until I tried Germolene . . . and have been free for over four months and what a blessing to be able to go to bed without the former dread . . ."

(*Signed*) M.J.M. (Mrs.)

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2. *At last tried GERMOLENE.*
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